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Editorial

Dear ABians,

What a splendid year we had in 2010. We saw 100+ libraries getting established with addition of new chapters and increasing the spread to eight states and still growing. There is no stopping to AB activities now which already has 250 libraries in 8 states with its 800 members from 17 chapters relentlessly working towards achieving the dream that we have all seen it and are committed to realize it together. While we are coming to the close of 4th anniversary year sooner, it is not one of those enthusiastic initiatives that just happened at the spur of moment and died its natural death due course. We still have the same vigor, enthusiasm and willingness to make it happen and never stop. It does take splendid internal energy, self motivation and lot of teamwork and we have showed it all throughout the year.

The most heartening part of this growth story is that we living to the commitment of not only setting up more and more libraries but ensuring they are being utilized properly and also trying to help students from rural and remote areas in their overall development. Look at the names of the places where we have set the libraries up which tells the corners we are trying to reach to and the range of activities through which we ensure the library usage as well as student development, and during this overall journey our volunteer's are also gaining a lot in terms of new experience and getting opportunities to utilize their talent. There can't be a better win-win.

Having said that we still need to continuously keep reviewing our objectives, the time-to-time challenges, reflect on ourselves and ensure we are doing the right thing. We also need to keep focus on our wheels i.e. our efforts and funds and ensure there is continuous in-flow of both of it. We have just seen a way we can keep marching; now we just need to keep the target in sight and keep going. Kudos to all ABians and keep it up.

Editor.

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Thank You for Making This Issue Happen

- Deepali Dhar (IBM)
- Tanuja Dunga (IBM)
- Navneet Surana (Atos Origin)
- Neetu Surana (IBM)
- Kailas Narawade (AksharBharati / Sewa)
- Santosh Patil (IBM)
- Rahul Patil (Student) – Cover Photo

Fifteen on 15 and Twelve on 14

In a unique initiative last year AksharBharati established 15 libraries on 15th August - our Independence Day and 10 libraries on 14th November – the Children’s day. During one of our AB monthly meeting some of the volunteers came up with this idea to celebrate these special days in a different manner and use this as an opportunity to make it big for AB. The first of this initiative was executed on 15th August 2010 and it was very successful not only in terms of establishing the libraries but also in creating the volunteer enthusiasm, encouragement and momentum on library setup activities. Following this success story we decided to repeat this on 14th November 2010 by establishing 10 more libraries. Such events involve huge sum of money, volunteer efforts and more importantly it is the test of coordination, but AB volunteer’s team work and application of their professional skills and experience comes in handy to deliver such ideas and turn it into reality. It would be no wonder if these special events become a norm of our regular operations in year 2011 and more to come.



15 August (Independence Day) Libraries

- Bhadrachalam, Andhra Pradesh
- Bengaluru, Karnataka
- Jodhpur, Rajasthan
- Loni, Dist. Yawatmal, Maharashtra
- Ujani, Dist. Latur, Maharashtra
- Mangaon Budruk, Dist. Raigad, Maharashtra
- Bahirwadi (Mehenduri), Dist. A'nagar, Maharashtra
- Turambe, Dist. Kolhapur, Maharashtra
- Ghorpadwadi, Dist. Ahmednagar, Maharashtra
- Wambori, Dist. Ahmednagar, Maharashtra
- Vishrantwadi, Pune, Maharashtra
- Vadgaon Sheri, Pune, Maharashtra
- Sinhgad Road, Pune, Maharashtra
- Chikalgaon, Dist. Pune, Maharashtra
- Rawadi (Chikalgaon). Dist. Pune. Maharashtra

14 November (Children’s Day) Libraries

- Chennai, Tamilnadu
- Chennai, Tamilnadu
- Ozarkhede, Dist. Jalgaon, Maharashtra
- HIngangaon, Dist. Ahmednagar, Maharashtra
- Dengachi Met, Dist. Thane, Maharashtra
- Jamgaon, Dist. Pune, Maharashtra
- Neral, Dist. Raigad, Maharashtra
- Hadapsar, Pune, Maharashtra
- Ronapal, Dist. Ratnagiri, Maharashtra
- Solapur, Maharashtra
- Loni, Dist. Yawatmal, Maharashtra
- Dahanu, Dist. Thane, Maharashtra

AB Student Internship Program

AB provided a few opportunities for student internships in 2010 with various projects.

- Rutuja Kshirsagar and Priya Siddha, both MBA students conducted an external assessment of effectiveness of AB activities through Project Prabhav.
- MSW interns Mahesh Pohaneekar and Pradip Patil did feedback collection for Project Dhruva activities for two months.
- Sumit Kale, an Engineering student worked with AB Hadapsar chapter for one month to support various activities of this chapter.

AB starts in Bay Area

In November 2010 we started a chapter in Bay Area (California, USA) with the help of some of our enthusiastic friends and AB volunteers who have migrated there recently. The primary objective of this group is to support AB in fund raising activities and other back-office activities like communication material preparation, communication management, web site maintenance etc. This chapter is born out of the desire of our friends and volunteers in Bay Area to do something for community and more importantly to remain associated with AB and lend their helping hands.

Abhinaya Puri is leading this chapter which consists of **Nihar Mehta, Nitin Madan, Ashish Puri** and **Anupam Shekhawat** as the core team members as of now.

We expect to have more such global chapters formulated in 2011 and we look forward to channelize individual and corporate funds through this as well as try to manage a lot of our backend activities with their help.

Do you wish to support AB from overseas?

If you overseas due to your work or personal reason for a short or longer term, there is no need to stop contributing to AB, the AB working model is developed such that you can always provide support through various non-field activities irrespective of where you are. If you are willing to provide support by being part of an existing chapter or forming a new chapter please contact the following –
Santosh Patil (sanpatil@in.ibm.com) for USA
Anurag Agarwal (anurag@kqinfotech.com) for any other location

AB Updates

- **ANNUAL DAY:** AB celebrated its annual day on April 19th, 2010 with a mega fund raising event at Pune featuring the reknowned Marathi/Hindi singer Avdhoot Gupte amongst other regular activities like volunteer's workshop, reflections sessions, children's activities and a thought sharing session for all AB members from all across country. While AB volunteers tested their event management skills successfully, it was an event well received by all of its volunteers, members and well wishers with a huge response.
- **100 Libraries in 2010:** AB added 100+ libraries in year 2010 in five states adding Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu newly to its list. It took the count to 250 libraries and overall spread in 8 states. A major contribution was done during the 15 libraries on 15th August and 12 libraries on 14th November drives. AB now has 17 active chapters with 800 members and 200 active volunteers. Established chapters at Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata with the help of IBM volunteers.
- **NASSCOM EVENT:** AB volunteers demonstrated excellent performance at NASSCOM Foundation Community Day event held on 23rd Oct at Pune. In this event 10 IT companies partnered with 10 NGO's presented an interesting acts and dances in front of large audience from IT/ BPO industries, CSR representatives and NGO coordinators. AB with Atos Origin made a rocking performance in this event. A very interesting act based on Vision 2020 was presented, showcasing the contribution of AB in achieving this big dream. AB's concept and ideology was very well conveyed through this play.
- **AB QUIZ COMPETITION 2011:** "Akshar Bharati" had organized quiz competition for all schools under Hadapsar geo chapter. Quiz was planned by all core team of Hadapsar chapter under guidance of Navneet surana and team. SHREE SHIVSHAMBHO SCHOOL, KHALAD was declared as the winner. Following are some facts about the quiz.
 - DATE - 8th JANUARY 2011
 - VENUE- SAMATA VIDYALAYA, URULI DEVACHI
 - Total schools participated- 14
 - Total participants- 72
 - Total volunteers- 27
 - Total audience- 576
- **NATURE TRAIL AT BHANDARDARA:** AB volunteers did a get-together on 2-3 Oct 2010 at Bhandardara dam area with an exciting nature trail which brought the team together to have some good time. They visited some of the schools and libraries around the area and did their planning workshop for the last quarter.

AB in Pictures

By Various AB Volunteers



Quiz Competition Final 2011 held at Samata Vidyalaya, Uruli Devachi.



AB Annual Day – Avdhoot Gupte renowned Marathi/Hindi singer, kids performing, Dr. Anand Yadav notable Marathi author addressing audience and AB volunteers expressing joy after successful event organization.

A Project Dhruva Pilot by Hadapsar Geo Chapter

by Navneet Surana

During this summer when most people preferred to chill out, AB Hadapsar core team set out and get to business table, and built a roadmap for itself (under the guidance of Anand Khedekar & Navneet) for the forth coming schooling season. Team felt a strong need to strengthen library utilization and book reading culture in all the schools wherein the team has set up libraries last year. The idea was to design a simplistic but working model of Dhruva which can be easily delivered by any new member joining the team. After few rounds of brainstorming, team conceived the idea of Dhruva Project, which is simple but at the same time effective in engaging with students and schools. Students were divided in 3 groups namely Primary (class 1 to 4th), secondary (5th to 7th) and senior secondary (8th to 10th). It was decided to cover one class from each group for this year's activity as a pilot among 18 schools in rural villages. Team decided to focus on class 4th (Marathi reading classes), 7th (collage competition) and 9th (English improvement) to start with this year. A list of probable activities for each of these classes was prepared along with the detailed Guidelines of how to conduct these activities. A planner was worked out and dates were agreed with each school for the 1st round of activities in a meeting conducted with all principals. The biggest challenge faced was to mobilize volunteers and transport logistics (as all the schools ranges from 20 to 70 kms from Hadapsar). Looking at the challenges of logistics and co-ordination, team also came with a novel idea of engaging students intern for a period of 1 year thereby creating a win-win engagement for both. Sumeet Kale and Priyanka came on board. Under the initial leadership of Anand and thereafter Nilam, the project took its wings on 17th July-10. Thereafter there was no looking back. In spite of all hurdles on its way, team could successfully cover all the Schools / Classes as planned. This was possible due to the sincerity and dedication of Hadapsar Geo chapter members like – Nilam, Deepankar, Mahesh, Sumeet, Priyanka, Vaishali, Sangita, Fatema, Rolson, Jalpa, Neetu, Kailashji & others.

The result was an enthusiastic participation from students in all activities. While Collage making brought out the creativity of the students, Reading Marathi helped boost the confidence of children. English Test was a good indicator for the teachers & students to know their level in this essential skill. Besides it was a good interaction with students and staff to reiterate book reading culture



Know our Volunteers

Nilam Baraliya



Nilam joined Akshar Bharti Hadapsar chapter in Jan-10 and in a short span of few months, she understood the nuts and bolts of Akshar Bharti project & became the forerunner to drive pilot project Dhruva across 18-20 schools in the rural areas of Pune (as far as 60 kms in Saswad region). She happens to be a silent worker and leads by example, never missing an opportunity to contribute to the field work. When she takes the center stage in schools hosting the Dhruva activity, looks as if a professional teacher from City Public school is taking the session. Her always smiling face and never tiring attitude has pumped energy among other participants of Hadapsar Geo chapter.

Nilam writes - It was one of my dreams to work for the needy people & children and through AB I got this opportunity. My first participation in Social Activity was to set up Library at Nutan High school, Wadki. It was a proud moment. With library setup, we have conducted the Dhruva Activity at about 18 schools. To speak to students about the books they are reading and conducting the activity like Collage, English Improvement etc. is the main motto of Dhruva Project. This inculcates in students to read more books of Library and help them develop all round personality. In all engagements, the response of students was good. They just need motivation and proper guidance, to do much more. This is our helping hand for them to develop and grow. To help for the education is nothing but to be part to make their life better. Also I cannot forget my visit to Mamata Sadan at Saswad. It was my first meeting with Orphanage children and the staff. We can't even imagine if such orphanage were not there? Suddenly tears rolled from my eyes when I met with the children over there. This is one of the important task of AB to be conducted every year. It's rightly said that to work for ourselves is really not a big task and there is no other satisfactory feeling than to work for others.

Not a Member Yet? Want to Contribute?

AksharBharati provides a range of opportunities for you to be connected to this social cause and contribute to the development of future of India. You can choose from one of the following activities to be a part of the AB family –

Volunteering

- Library setup activities (site visits, due diligence, book transportation, library setup, follow up activities, kids' activities & competitions etc.)
- Road shows, fund raising, awareness building
- Back office activities (administrative activities, web site management, general management)

Donations

- Individual cash contribution
 - Donate a primary book set
 - Donate a secondary book set
 - Donate a entire book set
- Institutional fund raising effort
- Individual/institutional equipment support (book shelves, transportation vehicles, computers or other related equipment)

To know more how you can help us, please contact us at info@aksharbharati.org or call Kailas on +91-9604533919.