

A 'Dream' of hope

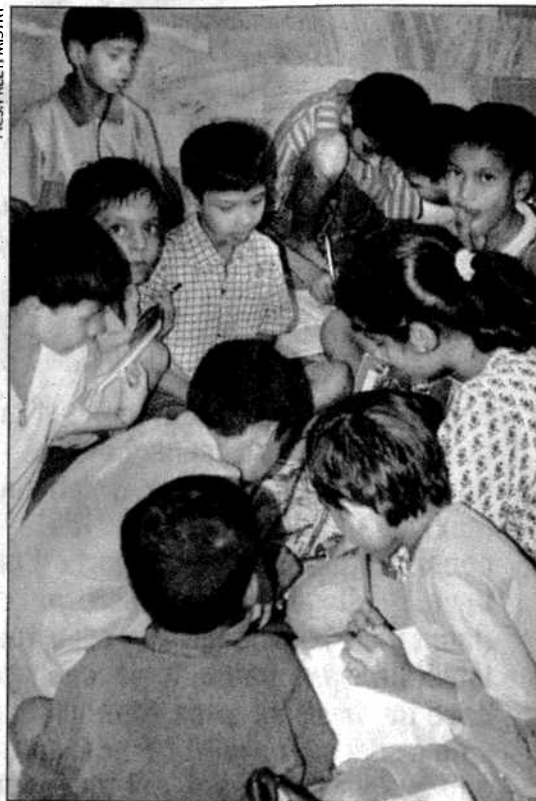
Kunaal Majgaonkar | Borivali

Teaching is considered a noble profession. Especially when you endeavour to educate underprivileged children who drop out of school at a very young age.

Dream India 2020, an NGO cradled in Borivali's (East) Hanuman Temple was the brainchild of three computer engineers from Tamil Nadu - Varun Rangarajan, Eswaramoorthy K and Natrajan Raman. According to Varun, "We would often observe very young children playing around. One day we decided to devote our free time for a constructive cause. So, we started this project and luckily it has gained a lot of popularity today". Today, this NGO is present in five cities across India.

A class of about 25 students between the ages of five to sixteen meet every Saturday and Sunday. Their subjects are a diverse and interesting blend of computers, numeral or even a tour to the museum or planetarium. "We aim at imparting basic knowledge, which will at least help them in future to secure a decent job. Many of our students draw very well, hence we intend on giving them

PICS: PREETI MISTRY



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formal training in drawing."

So do the students like this class? "I hated going to school. But Dream India 2020 helped me get over this mental block. I learn so many new things here. I look forward to the week-ends," quips Ajay, a student.

Geeta Saini also loves her 'weekend school', "I wait for the weekend. They are full of fun and frolic, learning and games. I find computers most interesting. Computers have always fascinated me, but I never thought I would be able to learn it, leave alone touch one". These students are exposed to a wide world of knowledge through the internet.

Though today, Eshwar is in Dubai and Natrajan in America, they continue to support their dream. The organisation receives several books from NRI's and organisations all over the globe.

What is the way forward for this school? "We do not want people money, we value their time more. Our vision for Dream India 2020 is to set off a full-fledged school with subsidised fees without compromising on facilities. Medical awareness programmes, alcohol awareness drives and a few other developmental programmes are also on the card", states Varun.

A common question Varun has to often answer is "What difference would teaching 10 kids make to the country?" to which he proudly replies "The difference is not for the country but for those 10 children".

