

REPORT by A.L.P.A.N.A. (Regd.)

The TENTH SAMBHAV 2015: Ten Years of showcasing artistic talent of the specially abled persons for inclusive growth

The persons whom we call disabled seemed to be more abled than the abled. This has been proved year after year by the Delhi based NGO, A.L.P.A.N.A. since 2006 when SAMBHAV was launched as a platform for showcasing the artistic talents of special persons.

Witnessing their performances and artistic talent the abled too would bow out. The performances of these specially gifted persons in the three - day event, 'SAMBHAV 2015' at New Delhi were like a picture of perfection.

SAMBHAV which means "possible" was conceived and started in 2006 by Delhi-based NGO –Association for Learning Performing Arts & Normative Action (A.L.P.A.N.A.)—to help promote inclusive arts within the context of inclusive growth. SAMBHAV showcases artistic empowerment of specially talented persons. A.L.P.A.N.A. runs a small school having about 150 students in different streams and try to contribute a bit in an often neglected and difficult area.

The objectives of SAMBHAV are to promote inclusive growth and be a catalyst in fulfilling commitments of the global society towards persons with disability, to showcase inclusiveness of Indian society, to empower challenged persons, particularly artists, through development of skills and enhancement of creativity in various fields of arts and to work towards sharing of ideas, knowledge, achievements and experiences through sustainable interactions among different stake holders.

The tenth edition of SAMBHAV, showcasing the artistic talent of physically and mentally challenged artistes from 16 countries including India, concluded in the weekend of 13, 14 and 15 November 2015 at India International Centre, New Delhi with a resounding success. The three-day festival, organised annually by A.L.P.A.N.A. Society, this year attracted groups from Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Iran, Nepal, Russia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Wales besides groups from Indian States of Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telengana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland and West Bengal.

It included International seminars on artistic empowerment of disabled persons, an exhibition of art and craft by the challenged artists from participating countries, signing of Memorandum of Understanding for mutual collaboration, International Yoga workshop, International Art & Craft Workshop and performances by twenty three troupes from twelve countries at India International Centre, New Delhi.

SAMBHAV 2015 was inaugurated in the morning of 13 November 2015 by Shri BK Goswami, Hon'ble Chancellor of Sir Padampat Singhanian University. He exhorted all sections of society to work with the challenged artists.

Art and craft exhibition was inaugurated by Shri Wajahat Habibullah, former Chairman, National Commission for Minorities in India on 13 November 2015.

The inaugural event on the first evening started with a video message by **Mr Pranab Mukherjee, Honourable President of India and a short film on ten years of SAMBHAV journey**. Cultural programme started with a fabulous performance by the special students of 'A.L.P.A.N.A.' who presented Batu, a pure dance item in Odissi style. The Russian Association for the Blind, Moscow team presented traditional Russian music and a popular inspiring song of 2nd World War. The Society for Welfare of Intellectually Disabled, Dhaka, Bangladesh team presented patriotic song based dance item and folk dances on harvesting. Team of WARDS, Bengaluru, Karnataka presented dance item based on Vande Mataram and Raas. The Art for All, Bangkok, Thailand team presented traditional dance and song. The Blind Association, Dimapur, Nagaland presented folk songs. The MSMV, Palanpur, Gujarat presented Garba.

Smt Stuti N Kacker, Chairperson, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights in India was the Chief Guest. HE Syed Muazzem Ali, High Commissioner of Bangladesh in New Delhi and Shri RN Nayak, Former CMD, Powergrid were the distinguished guests of the evening. After watching the fabulous performances, all the dignitaries concluded that persons who are physically or mentally challenged have different and special talents in them. If their potential is rightly identified, tapped and channelled they too are capable of doing and producing results like other people. All the groups performed so well that it was impossible to tell from their synchronization and rhythm in group and solo, on traditional dance, folk and group performances that they were mentally or physically challenged. It proved that they had special ability!

On the second day, for the first time in SAMBHAV ambit, an International Art and Craft workshop was held. All the participants from twelve countries participated in the workshop and it was tribute to learning from each other, across the cultures towards a inclusive global society.

The International Seminar sessions were chaired by Dr. Dharmendra Kumar, Director, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Institute for Physically Handicapped. In three sessions of the seminar eight papers were presented by resource persons from Australia, Wales, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Russia and Nepal.

SAMBHAV 2015 was a platform, where Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) was signed between A.L.P.A.N.A Society and EQUART of Wales, UK, the organisations that have been working for inclusive growth of mentally and physically challenged persons through performing arts. The objective of the MoU was to share the experience in the field for mutual benefit and to provide such platforms in the countries of the signatories to stage similar participative efforts.

On the second day evening, Shri Lov Verma, Federal Secretary of the Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities in Government of India was the Chief Guest. Dr Jagdish Prasad, Director General Health Services and ex-officio Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in the Government of India and HE Mr Deep Kumar Upadhyay, Ambassador of Nepal in New Delhi were the Distinguished Guests. Artists with

special ability from THPI, Hyderabad presented Kuchipudi dance. A Joint Chorus of Opera singing was presented by teams from Salubrious, Brisbane, Australia and Equart, Wales, UK accompanied by performance in sign language. The one-legged dancer Miss Roma from Kathmandu, Nepal mesmerized the audience with her patriotic and folk dances. Shalom special school, Bhopal team presented popular Hindi song tune based dance items. The team with visual disability from DPAB, Bhutan presented patriotic songs and music. The Cotagala Special School, Sri Lanka presented Kandian Dance. The Cherry Blossom Nagaland team presented folk dances and song through sign language. The special students of 'A.L.P.A.N.A.' presented Tricolour dance. The Chief Guest likened the spirit and tempo of the participants to the special Olympics held earlier and wished SAMBHAV all success and more achievements in future.

On the third day, an International Yoga workshop was conducted by expert from S-VYASA, Bengaluru. All the participants from twelve countries participated in the workshop.

For the closing ceremony on the third day, Dr Upendra Tripathy, Federal Secretary of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in Government of India was the Chief Guest. Dr Arun K Panda, Additional Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in the Government of India and Shri UP Singh Additional Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in the Government of India were the Distinguished Guests. The highlight of the evening cultural programme was Akhabandaswari, a prayer of Goddess Durga through dance presented by Manasa, Hyderabad. The Salubrious, Brisbane, Australia team presented songs based on national integration. The Akshyaya Kshetram Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh team presented patriotic song in Telugu and Kuchipudi dance. The Blind Association Tehran, Iran team presented patriotic songs and played on organ. The Behala Bodhayam West Bengal team presented remix patriotic songs based dance. The Pathum Uyana Sri Lanka team presented traditional Sri Lankan dances. The Jeevodaya Nagpur Maharashtra team presented bollywood remix dance. The specially gifted students of A.L.P.A.N.A. Institute presented a band. "I am touched by the talent of challenged people at one platform from across the world made possible by A.L.P.A.N.A. Society" said the Chief Guest. He congratulated A.L.P.A.N.A for organising the grand event, SAMBHAV.

SAMBHAV 2015 had for the first time, an international art and crafts workshop for the specially abled artists from across the globe.