

## EDITORIAL

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The October issue focuses on one of the major challenges facing our country that of providing quality education to the girl child in general and vulnerable groups in particular. Other articles highlight the importance of reading story books as a means of not only improving language but enjoying the experience itself.

The first section, Impressions, starts with 'Date with Ruskin Bond,' an iconic and respected Indian writer. This is an interesting interview in which he speaks about the kind of books young children must read and the important habit of cultivating reading at an early age. He has written many books for children as he feels that it is the best way to know about their interests and wants. Many of his books have been included in the school curriculum as they impart strong messages without being moralistic.

'*Barkhaa - A Shower of Happiness in a Child's Life*' further highlights on the importance of books and stories. The author discusses how *Barkhaa*—a graded reading series recently published by the NCERT creates a world of joy and wonder for the young child. It focuses on how the magic of stories based on children's daily lives helps in inculcating the habit of reading at an early age.

The recurrent column on Eminent Indian Educationists— Their Life and Thoughts presents a profile on Giju Bhai Badheka: On Being a Primary Teacher. The main message for primary teachers is that experimentation is the key to change. Examining alternatives and options in all aspects of teaching-learning is highlighted in the work of this great educationist. This column has been coordinated by Dr Anupam Ahuja, Convenor of the Series. She may be contacted at the Department of Teacher Education and Extension, NCERT for more information.

This is followed by the Article section comprising five articles out of which the first three focuses on gender inequality in the Maldives and India. The first article examines the concern against the Millennium Development Goals in the island nation of the Maldives. It reveals the present status and ensuing challenges for achieving the elusive goal of quality education.

The Indian scenario of girls' education and ideas for promoting gender equality is the focus of the next article. One of the key issues namely, low participation and factors contributing to this phenomenon are discussed in detail. Suggestions for improving the status of the girl child through major schemes and programmes are also elucidated.

The third article explores how gender inequality poses a serious barrier to access a healthy life, within a Marxist perspective.

Whether a boy or girl, problematic behaviour is exhibited by most children at some time or the other. This is a serious issue that all of us confront and which calls for timely help. The fourth article elaborates upon the causes and kinds of childhood disturbances along with remedial measures, for corrective action.

The final article is a Book Review on the English Language Teacher's Handbook: How to Teach Large Classes with Few Resources. The reviewer aptly calls it *A Teacher's Companion* and recommends it as must read for all teachers of English as it focuses on a number of ideas for overcoming the challenges of a large ELT class with few resources. She also highlights that this book emphasises how teaching of English can be made more effective and joyful.

In the next column EENET Asia Newsletter, the author details out how the child friendly school concept can be inculcated into teacher training. We hope you will enjoy this as it refers to the work going on in the Kingdom of Bhutan, a small country in the Himalayas.

Finally, in the recurrent column Did You Know, the Child Labour Act 1986 is presented. This it was felt would provide the necessary information about this important Act in view of the recent Act on Child's Right to Free and Compulsory Education 2009 which was published in the July 2009 issue.

The efforts of Kanwaljeet Kaur, DTP Operator and Shashi Devi, Proof Reader are acknowledged.

**Editorial Group (Academic)**