

# Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1

January-April 2009



Come, let us do something

## Inside this Issue :

From Editor's Desk  
.....1

MEDHA 2008-2010  
Study Tour  
.....2

A Journey,  
Extraordinaire  
.....4

EKK - A Dream  
.....6

Seminar Presentation  
at IIFT .....7

Columns from  
Abroad.....8

Eso Kichu Kori &  
myself.....9

Another Glare to  
Share.....9

Way to EKK .....10

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“Eso Kichu Kori” team members during Medha '08-'10 Study Tour at Angail (near Bangladesh Border), Bongaon on 30 November, 2008

## From Editor's Desk

We hope you are having a good time this year so far. Though there are severe ups and downs around us during this period, we feel the solution lies in trying to remain as much unfazed as possible and keep on carrying out our duties with utmost sincerity and passion. And things will definitely look up.

Here is the first newsletter issue of this year which brings to you the couple of events we have had over the last few months. The most important ones being *Borenyo Samman'09*, *Medha '08-'10 Study Tour* at Bongaon and presentation at Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), Kolkata. We hope you would enjoy these happenings through this issue.

This year is very important from EKK's point of view as the beneficiaries of first *Medha* batch '07-'09 have already appeared for their Higher Secondary exam. We are keeping a close watch with our fingers crossed and we once gain wish them all the success they duly deserve.



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## NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 1 January-April 2009



EKK members outside the residence of Laki Das [Inset: Laki Das] (Left)  
The approach to the residence of Uma Sarkar [Inset: Uma Sarkar] (Right)

### MEDHA 2008-2010 STUDY TOUR-I

As a part of 'Project Medha' site study, this time the destination was Bongaon. The aim was to visit five students supported by the organisation to evaluate their socio economic status, academic progress, and future goals. A questionnaire was prepared for this purpose. On 30 November 2008, a group of EKK members including Abira Ghosh, Onkar Prasad Ghosh, Kaushik Mukherjee, Sourav Das, Tania Dey and Gayatri Pal took Bongaon local. Shibu Tudu, an EKK sponsored student of *Bengal Engineering and Science University, Shibpur* (under 'Project Sopan'), also accompanied the team. Being a symbol of success against all extremities, the presence of Shibu in the team was expected to be a great source of inspiration for these five Medha beneficiaries. The team was received by a local reporter, Sri Nirupam Saha, and a local school teacher, Sri Harinarayan Sarkar at Bongaon station. The members of the team were very thankful to these people for making the trip memorable.

The study started by visiting Uma Sarkar and her family in Bakshipalli. The entrance to their hut was water-logged and one had to take resort of either the bamboo bridge or a slippery path made of sand bags to get into the hut, which lacks any electric connections. Uma, who secured 92.63% in *Madhyamik Pariksha* in spite of all the hardships, is confident to be a doctor by profession. Her mother, a practicing midwife, and father, a homeopathy practitioner imparts a big influence in Uma's career. Uma's clarity of vision about her future and her determination moved all the members.

Our next destination was Angrail, Gaighata Thana, the residence of Biswajit Tarafdar. This was located on the neighbourhood of the border of India and Bangladesh. Biswajit has to deal the BSF on a daily basis even on his way home from tuition at night. He lives with his parents and one sister.

(Contd.)



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## NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 1 January-April 2009



Shibu Tudu with Biswajit Tarafdar (Left), Subhrakanti Baul (Middle) & Shibu Tudu with Rinku Dhali (Right)

Biswajit's father owns a few acres of lands, which is the main source of their sustenance. His sister is Class XII pass out, and she could not proceed further education because of lack of money. The books donated by EKK were visible in plain sight. Biswajit wants to serve the community by becoming a teacher in future.

Laki Das, whom we paid a visit next, lives in Mediabazar, Chakdaho area. We were welcomed by her family, and a number of curious villagers, who gathered all around us. Laki's father is a carpenter and is the bread-earner of the family. Laki dreams about becoming a doctor so that she would treat the villagers in future.

Rinku Dhali is another EKK sponsored student, whose ambition is to be an Engineer. Her parents although supportive of her decision, wish that she becomes a doctor instead. Rinku dreams to earn enough money so that she could provide financial assistance to other needy people in the neighbourhood.

The final destination was Krishnachandrapur, the residence of Subhrakanti Baul. He envisions himself being a computer engineer in a few years time.

It was a mind blowing experience where we had a chance to interact with a bunch of talented youngsters, who are trying to live up to their dreams against all odds.

**Gayatri Pal**  
(Member abroad, EKK)



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# NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 1 January-April 2009



Dr. Ashim Gupta felicitated Sri Baldeo Sharma with the " EKK Borenyo Somman", 15 February 2009 (Left)  
Masterji Sri Baldeo Sharma with memento (Right)

## A JOURNEY, EXTRAORDINAIRE...

Alike previous year, the quest of Eso Kichu Kori was on this year also to find out our revered 'Borenyo'. In this regard, Eso Kichu Kori celebrated its second foundation day on 15th February 2009 by humbly honouring a pioneer, Sri Baldeo Sharma of Kolkata with "Borenyo Somman" for his lifelong contribution towards the betterment of education amongst economically challenged Hindi speaking children.

Primarily a resident of Gajipur District, Uttar Pradesh (near Varanasi), Sri Baldeo Sharma completed M.A in History from Allahabad University in 1965 and came to Kolkata with the aim to promote primary education. In his initial days in Kolkata, he taught at Bharatiya Bidya Bhawan, Kalighat from 1965-1970. During that stint, he sensed there was a genuine dearth of proper education amongst the economically challenged Hindi speaking children of an expansive area. Keeping in mind the problem, he founded Saraswati Vidyamandir at Pitambar Ghatak Lane, Chetla in 1970 exclusively for Hindi speaking children of the vast area around. The students are taught from Lower Nursery to standard V nowadays. Today this school has 7 teachers also. However, there has been no government aid behind the functioning of this school till date.

Masterji, as we call him, was selected as one of the 5000 personalities of the World in 1997 by American Bibliographic Institute. He was also honoured with his inclusion in the Millennium Hall of Fame in 1997 by American Bibliographic Institute.



Come, let us do something

# NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 1 January-April 2009



**Kaushik Das Sharma greeted Masterji with a bouquet (Left)  
Madhumita Datta bestowed him with Maanpotro (Right)**

Eso Kichu Kori conferred Masterji the "Borenyo Somman" in the form of a memento, a shawl, an address of honour and two audio CDs comprising of spiritual compilations. In the very beginning, Abira Ghosh (Secretary, EKK) & Tanushree DasSharma (Member, EKK) greeted Masterji by applying Tilak on his forehead. It was followed by imparting the shawl carried out by Abira Ghosh (Secretary, EKK) & Sreya Sen (Member, EKK). Kaushik DasSharma (Member, EKK) & our little friend Swaranna Mukherjee greeted him next with a bouquet each. Dr. Ashim Gupta (President, EKK) felicitated Masterji with the memento & Madhumita Datta (Vice President, EKK) bestowed him with the address of honour (*Maanpotro*) subsequently. Abhishek Bhattacharya (Volunteer, EKK) read out the address of honour to the audience. Finally, Kaushik Mukherjee (Member, EKK) conferred Masterji two audio CDs to culminate the felicitation program.

The entire program was anchored by Tania De (Member, EKK).

Masterji suffered a set-back in the form of heart attack in 2004 which has since hampered his relentless pursuit for the improvement of education. Eso Kichu Kori wishes Masterji (now 75 years old) a very good health for the rest of his life and picks up invaluable inspirations from an outstanding journey & the man of substance behind that great feat.

**Aveek Choudhury**  
(Member, EKK)



Come, let us do something

# NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 1 January-April 2009

## EKK - A DREAM



Eso Kichu Kori - I really can't recall why and how come I gave this name. But today I strongly feel there is no name under the sun as applicable as Eso Kichu Kori (EKK) for an organization which works for the needy but meritorious students. Sitting in an idle afternoon I thought and created this community on Orkut. Within one day the number of community member reached in 3 figures. I really didn't expect this type of response. Then we started dreaming collectively. The process is still going on and it will.

We are neither an old organization nor a very experienced one. But what we have achieved in two years is a good reputation. People rely on us and our work. This is the most important thing for any organization. And I strongly believe we achieved it by our sheer work and not by media coverage. But it is also true that media has given coverage to our uniqueness and good work. Not only in India has EKK its strong footings but also in abroad. The non-resident Bengalis living in various parts of the world believe in EKK. They want to work for EKK and they are willing to donate. They always consider it seriously and compassionately. We all know that the issue of "foreign currency" is very complicated in the field of donation. Now EKK has become a well known organization to many non-resident Bengalis, who always wanted to do something for this kind of students but did not get the proper channel. For them EKK is an ideal ventilator. It's not an exaggeration to write that EKK is a new hope for them. We had arranged for a meeting in Santa Cruz, California. That was our first overseas meeting. Thanks to Gayatri, Rituparna, Indrani, Rajat and everybody else who were present in that wonderful evening. I will never forget those bright faces when I gave them the EKK badge. A very small badge but they considered it as very precious. In my Boston days when I talked to any Bengali it was my duty to let him/her know about EKK. At least they never showed any disrespect to EKK. It's a reality; everyone is not helping EKK now. But sometimes they pass the information regarding EKK to their relatives and friends. Of course it makes differences.

We have tried to bring changes in different ways but still we have much more to do. At the starting point we really didn't know how we could proceed. Now we are helping nearly sixty students. They know EKK is with them. Whenever there is a need EKK will stand beside them. Not only do the Bengali people have strong faith on us but also the meritorious students consider EKK as a great support for them. But we still have a long way to go. We have a dream. At the age of two EKK is a symbol of hope. We, the family members of EKK have very big onus to make this image larger.

Let us do something.

Let us strive undauntedly to excel in every sphere of our duties.

Let us be cordial to all and understand our responsibility towards the society.

**Madhumita Datta**  
(Vice President, EKK)



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# NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 1 January-April 2009



IIFT Campus Kolkata, Logo of Institute (Right)

## SEMINAR PRESENTATION AT IIFT

EKK is growing day by day and it is becoming more and more familiar amongst fellow citizens. As a recognition of our work, we recently got an invitation from IIFT (Indian Institute of Foreign Trade), Kolkata. IIFT is a leading business school of the country and we were invited there to give a presentation about the activities of "ESO KICHU KORU" to their M.B.A first year students.

It was at about 11 a.m. on 21 February 2009, a four-member team of EKK comprising of Kaushik Das Sharma, Nilarya Talukdar, Aveek Choudhury and me entered the IIFT campus at Sector-5, Saltlake City, Kolkata. Our presentation was intended as a part of the social awareness course under their curriculum. We were very cordially welcomed by their Programme Coordinator. After a short discussion, we were called to brief and have a good interaction with the students.

We entered the classroom at about 11.15 a.m. and Kaushik DasSharma took the stage to deliver the presentation. With his professional experience and expertise, he soon captivated the whole class. Other members also joined him with supplements regarding their particular experiences in EKK. The 30 odd students present in the class listened to us with utmost silence and at the end of the presentation we were lauded with applause. We could see the appreciation of our effort in their eyes. In the interactive session some of the students asked some very relevant questions and we did satisfy them with our pertinent replies.

It was indeed a very good experience for us. IIFT assured to make a better relationship in near and distant future with us.

**Kaushik Mukherjee**  
(Member, EKK)



Come, let us do something

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 1 January-April 2009

### COLUMNS FROM ABROAD



There have been moments in my life, when I believe I was struck by destiny. One such incidence was when I came across the remarkable video directed by Madhumita-di (Madhumita Datta) named 'Tarader Kotha', while surfing on Orkut. For the longest time, I was looking for a platform through which I could reach out to those great talents, who could potentially become valuable citizens given the opportunities they lack. Joining the efforts of EKK, to support these brilliant, extremely needy students has become the much-desired path I wanted to travel. Journey becomes easier if travelled together. Today we have a strong volunteer base world-wide, and the spirit of team EKK has never been stronger.

This year, I had the privilege to visit few of the students sponsored under Project *Medha* in the Bongaon region of West Bengal. It was such an inspiring and eye opening experience at the same time. It was inspiring because I had the opportunity to observe closely the level of dedication of grass-root level volunteers of team EKK. It was eye opening because I realized that my world would have been incomplete have I not met these latent talents and seen their world with my own eyes. It is all about coming out of your own zone of comfort to get a very different perspective of life that makes it more rewarding. For instance, when I was exposed to the harsh reality of Uma Sarkar, a student of eleventh standard, who barely has access to the basic necessities, I pondered what could be the driving force to make her go. And there I saw it in her calm, but gleaming eyes; the unbeatable determination. The power to fight against all odds makes her the winner of this survival game. She has done it in the secondary examination by scoring 92.63%, and I am confident that she will do it again. 'Doctor' was her firm answer when she was asked about her career goal. Uma's mud house, surrounded by flood-water, can only be accessed from the main road by a narrow bamboo bridge and there is no running water or electricity in the house. I was amazed to find that although there are signs of poverty everywhere, it did not dampen the spirit of the family. I was honoured to meet the greatest source of her inspiration, her parents, who would not give up their hope for Uma and ready to do whatever it takes to fulfil her dreams.

The story continues as I went on meeting more bright faces and dreamy eyes namely, Subhrakanti Baul, Laki Das, Biswajit Tarafder, Rinku Dhali and others throughout my site visit. Everyone has his/her own unique hardships and struggles with unbelievable determination to overcome it. They could become doctors, engineers, teachers and other accomplished individuals of the future, if they get the opportunity to flourish to their potential. An immense sense of joy filled my heart when I witnessed our visit touched their hearts. It is never too late to be a part of their journey to make it a happy one. With financial and mental support from all of us, they would be able to change their destiny. Our visit raised their hope once more and we have to ensure that their dreams come true.

Thank you EKK for allowing me to be a part of your team. I greatly admire your sincere efforts to make the world a better place. May you continue to carry the torch to bring hopes to these youngsters from the remotest parts of Bengal.

**Gayatri Pal**  
(Member abroad, EKK)



Come, let us do something

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 1 January-April 2009

### ESO KICHU KORI AND MYSELF



'Eso Kichu Kori' is a phrase which I always cherish to hear and tell others. Whenever I think deeply about it I find an inner meaning which inspires me to do something new without any expectation and teach me to indulge myself for the development of our society.

Today, I feel very proud to be a part of this association. EKK acts as my guardian. It shows the way to build my career. It helps to make my life beautiful. It turns my imagination into reality. It matters a lot to me and I cannot dream of a life without EKK.

Not only me but also many poor students have been able to come out from the darkness of life with the help of EKK. That is why EKK was established. It offers book to learn, pen-pencil to write, scholarships for higher studies. In a nutshell, EKK helps to achieve the ultimate goal removing all the hurdles.

Really, I find myself very lucky that I have got EKK with me. I convey my good wishes to all the members of EKK and wish all the success of this association.

**Shibu Tudu**  
(SOPAN Scholar, EKK)

### ANOTHER GLARE TO SHARE



We do not know whether any heavenly wonders appeared in the sky or any heavenly beings like angels announced him as the 'savior of the world' when Rijul was born. But his parents Swaswata and Indrani made him very very special through their token gesture towards the activities of EKK.

The couple lives in San Diego, USA. During their short visit to Kolkata, they arranged a get-together in the 'Annaprashan' ceremony of Rijul. In the invitation card, they requested all the invitees to contribute to the funds of 'Eso Kichu Kori' or any other such organisation instead of bringing any gift for Rijul. The couple visited us after a week or so and handed over a considerable amount in the same way as in Satyajit Ray's last film 'Agantuk' Manamohan did, calling it nothing but *floccinaucinihilipilification*. Nowadays, Devas do not shower flower petals but little Rijul got a shower of blessings from thousands of unknown milky ways for this exemplary step from his parents. We salute both Indrani and Saswata.

**Abira Ghosh**  
(Secretary, EKK)



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## NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 1 January-April 2009

### Way to EKK

All interested donors may kindly send cheque/ demand drafts (of Indian Banks & in Indian Currency) in favour of "ESO KICHU KORI" to the following address:

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Website: <http://www.ekk.org.in/>

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