A sea of clouds in my mind...
Will it catch the glow of rising sun?

Painting by Madhuri Kapur
Computer Trainer, IICP
From the Consulting Editor ...

Life can be compared to the ocean. Calm and serene at times while rough and turbulent at others. But in the end, it is always beautiful. And in this unpredictable ocean of life, IICP has been like a steadying rock for countless families of children with cerebral palsy. Offering guidance, support and hope, the organisation has, for the last four decades, given so many persons – young and old – the optimism and encouragement to celebrate. IICP has shown how one can face the greatest adversity with patience and perseverance, and how even the smallest achievement can become a reason to celebrate.

This issue of Deepshikha shares a kaleidoscope of photographs which highlight some of the events that have been celebrated in recent months at IICP. Awards and recognition, opportunities for learning and participation, efforts and achievements, festivals and outings, or simply the life of a person whose work has given voice to thousands – everything has been a reason to celebrate. Life itself is a celebration!

As Shauna Niequist writes in her book, Cold Tangerines: Celebrating the Extraordinary Nature of Everyday Life, “... when you realize that the story of your life could be told a thousand different ways, that you could tell it over and over as a tragedy, but you choose to call it an epic, that’s when you start to learn what celebration is. When what you see in front of you is so far outside of what you dreamed, but you have the belief, the boldness, the courage to call it beautiful instead of calling it wrong, that’s celebration.”

Anjana Tha

From the Editor ...

It seems appropriate to dedicate this issue of Deepshikha to the theme ‘Celebrations’. It is also fitting to start by celebrating talent. Thus, we selected a painting by my colleague Madhuri that combines bursts of colour with a message of hope and optimism. Underlying these sentiments is a tinge of sadness and this is also reflected in the hues of the colours she has used in her painting.

On the back cover is a painting of the Devi Durga by my multi-talented colleague, Shibshankar Chakraborty. His artistry ensures work of a high quality in the ‘Art and Handwork’ programme in the Adult Day Centre.

The most important message we hope will be conveyed by this issue of Deepshikha is that we have much to celebrate and much to be grateful for.

Keena Sen
Celebrating World Cerebral Palsy Day

A festival of films on Disability by Ankur Advocacy Group, IICP in collaboration with British Council Division and Nandan: 25 and 26 September 2015

A packed hall listens to actor Sohini Sengupta’s inaugural address

... from Times of India 26 September 2015

Film Festival on Disability

Kolkata: Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy and its advocacy group, Ankur, British Council and Nandan are holding a two day film festival at Nandan 2 to mark World Cerebral Palsy Day, which falls in October. The festival will be over this Saturday.

Actress Sohini Sen and British Council Director, East India Sujata Sen were present at the inauguration on Friday.

It showcases avant garde films on a range of challenges made by inspiring film makers from India and UK, besides encouraging discussions and inspiring talks in between screenings on both days.

Samarjit Guha, Head Programmes East India, British Council Division, moderates a panel discussion on the second day; the panelists were film maker Abhijit Choudhury, actor Soumili Ghosh Biswas and Jeeja Ghosh, Head of Advocacy and Disability Studies, IICP
Celebrating Achievement and Effort

Annual Prize Distribution June 2015

A dance by the inclusive pre-primary class

Alka Jalan, philanthropist, donor and well-wisher, gives away prizes for General Proficiency

Asis Mitra, Company Secretary & Head, Corporate Affairs, Tata Steel Production and Distribution Ltd, gives away prizes for Computer Applications, Activities of Daily Living and Social Skills
Jeeja Ghosh
Receives The Telegraph True Legends Award

Jeeja Ghosh receives her award from well known film director, Suman Ghosh
Scott Warrick with his wife Debbie visited IICP from Canada in remembrance of his mother Anne Warrick, friend and mentor.

Sudha Kaul, Vice Chairperson, IICP said as she welcomed the Warricks, “Anne opened her heart and mind to everyone. She taught us that it did not matter who you were as long as you had confidence. She was the older sister I never had. She showed us the path for people who do not speak and introduced me to the magic of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)”.

IICP welcomes Scott and Debbie Warrick

Debbie at the Centre for Special Education

Scott, Culinary Coordinator in Algonquin College, Ottawa, meets a trainee in the Catering Unit of the Vocational Training Centre

A performance by the school band; the instruments were procured with the support of Anne Warrick
The special issue of Deepshikha dedicated to Anne is released by Scott and Debbie; also in the picture is Subhra Chatterjee, Deputy Director, Communications, IICP

Debbie meets Putul Biswas with who Anne shared a special and close personal bond

“Anne Aunty’s contribution in introducing us to the world of AAC was unparalleled. It is the very foundation on which we stand today – that we can make others understand what we are saying and also tell them we understand what they are saying – is only because of her!”

Performances by Persons who use AAC
Celebrating the 69th Independence Day

Guests of Honour SR Dutt and Uma Puri and Chairperson Uma Ahmad sing the National Anthem after the flag is hoisted; the National Anthem is led by students of the Centre for Special Education

Prerona Guha Biswas, a student of the National Open School Unit, recites a poem by Kazi Nazrul Islam

A poem composed by Debasish Das of the Adult Day Centre is recited by his parents Nibbilesh and Swarnamayee Das

A dance drama especially written and choreographed for the occasion is presented; the lead dancer is Kathika Giri, a professional in the Respite Services
Celebrating the Spirit of Volunteering

Mahatma Gandhi said “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others” and indeed, we in IICP are fortunate to have our loyal and committed band of volunteers. As a small token of appreciation, Volunteer’s Day was celebrated with fun and joy. Our talented special educator-foursome Suchetna, Ruma, Rakhi and Poulami presented a beautifully crafted dance. Special ‘Angavastrams’ (scarves) were printed in our Printing Unit and presented to each volunteer by a student of the school or a trainee of the Vocational Training Centre. Ritwik Dev, a student of Calcutta International School and the youngest volunteer at present, spoke about his experiences. A cake baked at IICP’s Catering Unit ended the occasion with a ‘sweet touch’!
Celebrating Opportunities for Learning and Participation

Disco

Supported by Tata Education Trust, a ‘disco’ for the Adult Day Centre is organised twice a year. The strobe lights and foot-tapping music is enjoyed by students from neighbouring schools and the IICP ‘gang’!

Teacher’s Day

A memorable programme with dance and song, recitation and readings was organised by students for all staff.
Pre-Puja Camp

The Adult Day Centre’s 4-day residential camp was a great success!

Bands of Friendship

Rabbits (symbolising the bond between family and friends) were made at the Adult Day Centre for sale to all those celebrating this unique festival symbolising brotherhood and ties.

Training for Aspiring Beauticians

A 30-hour training programme supported by Jamsetji Tata Trust was conducted by trained beauticians Priya Nath and Arpita Majumdar for trainees of the Vocational Training Centre and family members.

Inclusive Fest ‘Avsar’ at Akshar

Snigdha, Anju and Nabajit represented ICP in the ‘fire-less cooking’ competition in Akshar, an inclusive school in Kolkata and were awarded a ‘Special Mention’ from the judges for their Sandwich House and Pineapple Florets.
From the desk of MIBLOU President, Brian John Millar

Dear Committee Members and all Staff of IICP, Namaste!
We are very busy celebrating the 35 years of our MIBLOU Organisation this year. And so its a very opportune occasion to celebrate, at the same time, the 22 years of our close relationship with IICP. Because we’ve travelled the same path so closely for this long period. And believe me when I say I look forward to us all soon celebrating our quarter century of collaboration!
During our times together, there have been very large projects, and many smaller but possibly more meaningful ones. You have grown in stature, in human values, in education and many diverse areas. All accomplished with energy, conscientiousness, but mostly compassion for our less fortunate fellow beings.
And if all that isn’t worth celebrating – then I don’t know what is!!
Marika Millar, Vice President, joins hands with me to all celebrate together for a long time to come!
Long live IICP!
Long live MIBLOU!
Jai Hind!
Brian John Millar
President & Founder, MIBLOU

CBR Donor visit

MIBLOU has not just been funding our CBR projects but has helped IICP to add much needed infrastructure like the training facilities, hydrotherapy pool and apartments for short stay respite services. Marika has been closely involved in our CBR work in urban slums and a valuable guide. Every time she comes to Kolkata, she visits the sites where our staff are working. It was encouragement from Marika which made us approach new organisations to increase our area of work.

– Tessa Hamblin

Marika Millar on a home visit in one of the CBR project sites
Celebrating Festivals

... from Centre for Special Education

Diwali

Diwali is a festival of lights. We burst different types of firecrackers. I go out with my family to see the images of the Goddess Kali. We eat a lot of sweets. My favourite is narkol-naru (coconut sweets). All around, the houses are decorated with lights. It looks most lovely. How nice it would be if Diwali was celebrated every day!

Jeet Bera

Kali Puja

Kali Puja is a major festival of the Bengalis and we wait in anticipation for it all through the year. When Durga Puja is over, we feel sad but then we remember that Kali Puja is just a few days away and we are filled with excitement. Firecrackers! We can’t wait to buy different types of crackers. I just cannot imagine which ones we will burst! We will decorate the house with candles. We keep planning with great enthusiasm and counting the days to Kali Puja.

Debojyoti Roy

Durga Puja

Durga Puja is every Bengali’s favourite festival. When we go out, we see a lot of people, images and lights everywhere. In some of the pandals (marquees) there is music and in others, children dance to the rhythm of the ‘dhaak’ (drums). In some, people dance with the ‘dhunuchi’ (bowls of smoking incense). Our community pandal has evening ‘arati’ (prayers) followed by cultural programmes. Pandal hopping has a special charm for ‘Kolkatans’. There are a lot of discussions and arguments about which pandal is the best and which image of the Goddess is the prettiest. The street food and stalls are also a source of great attraction! The pleasure of wearing new clothes and shoes and going out with parents and siblings is something that keeps us going for the year.

Sayantan Mukherjee
Durga Puja

Durga Puja is celebrated in West Bengal around the same time as Diwali. People wear new clothes and pray to Goddess Durga for five days. Then they immerse the idols in the river.

When will the Pujas come?

Durga Puja is held in October. We wait for the Pujas as it is a happy occasion. School is closed. We go out and I get new clothes. My friends and I go to the mela (community fair).

Diwali comes after Durga Puja. There are lights and more lights everywhere! Mummy makes really nice sweets. I will burst a lot of firecrackers with my younger brother and my friends. That will be such fun!

I can't wait for the Pujas!

Mohammed Aryan

Pandal Hopping: An Experience

Last year I had a great experience during the Pujas when I went to visit my Mama (maternal uncle). On the second day of the Pujas, Ashtami, my Mama took us to see the lights and the pandals (marquees) with beautiful images. It was a first for me! I couldn’t walk very much but my Mama carried me around and took me into the pandals. Although I was feeling really bad about my Mama having to carry me, he was most enthusiastic and therefore, I got the opportunity to have a wonderful time eating a lot and having loads of fun. There was one thing I missed – the lights. In order to avoid the crowds since I have a disability, we went on this outing during the day. Nevertheless, we had a lot of fun!

Tanvir Hossain

Poonia Kab Aaaghai?

Durga Puja is celebrated during the month of Kali Chandra. The festival is celebrated all over Bengal and is called 'Durga Puja'. During the festival, the goddess Durga is worshipped as the slayer of evil and the preserver of good. The festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm and joy.

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I can't wait for the Pujas!

Mohammed Aryan
Celebrating Festivals

... from Adult Day Centre

Maa Durga is coming

The thought of Maa Durga coming fills us with happy anticipation!
With folded hands, we wait to welcome you
After a year of waiting
There is so much to write and share.
‘Kaash’ and ‘Sheuli’ blooming all around
Fill my heart with immense happiness.
On such a day of the Pujas
I remember my first meeting with you.
Pujas is a celebration for all
The wealthy, the poor, all mingle together
Oh Maa Durga, look at us all as equals
And with your divine affection
Let us also be blessed.

Barsha Bhattacharya

Festival Days

The days are filled with enjoyment for all
We wake up to the sound of dhaaks
When Maa Durga returns to earth
Everyone is filled with happiness
She sends Maa Lakshmi to every home
The noise of crackers makes us angry
But the lights of Diwali make everyone happy.

Debasis Das

Joy of Pujas

Durga Puja is a festival of joy. Pujas are synonymous with happiness, new clothes, tasty food, visiting the puja pandals, ‘adda’ (chit-chat) and the happiness of not following rules. Though I cannot walk or speak properly, my family members never exclude me from anything. They love spending time with me. Sometimes due to my disability, I am unable to go inside the puja pandals to see the images. At such times, we all simply see them from outside. I always enjoy the Pujas and have fun throughout the festival days. I hope that this year too, the Pujas are filled with happiness for me and all my friends.

Abhiroop Sengupta