

Balasabha School of Dance and Music

Alike the children from financially well off families, the children from financially backward families does not get opportunities to nurture their creative talents and get trained in those arts. Fostering creativity won't just increase the child's chance of an artist and improve their creativity, it does really contribute to their inherent talents and most of the rural children have no opportunity to scientific training in any of the art forms. The vision of Balasabha is to focus on the overall development of children. It was in that context, Kudumbashree District Mission of Kasaragod proposed the idea of Balasabha School of Arts and Music in CDS level, giving training in dance and music. Let us see what Kudumbashree Kasaragod District Mission has done to bring in this novel idea.

Balasabha

It is a collective attempt of children to ensure their participation in the democratic space at the local Government level and in their community. The prime objective of constituting Balasabha is to prevent inter-generational transmission of poverty through capability enhancement of children. Small Learning Groups for experimental and systematic learning, opportunities for understanding democratic process, participation in conserving environment, enabling children to unfold the intricacies of collectivization are the basic focal points of Balasabha.

How the concept of Balasabha School of Dance and Music was evolved?

Kasaragod had been in the forefront in achieving scores in the State School Youth festivals and as many contributions were given by the Cheruvathoor Panchayath in that context. It was Shri. Saiju, District Programme Manager then at the Kudumbashree District Mission of Kasaragod came up with a such a novel concept. As everyone found it interesting, the same was discussed with Kudumbashree State Mission and with Cheruvathoor Panchayath and the Panchayath showed their interest in the idea and assured that fund would be allocated for the same. And as a result RS. 1 lakh was received from Kudumbashree State Mission and the Cheruvathoor Panchayath had given Rs 35,000.

And therefore, Kudumbashree Kasaragod District Mission launched Kudumbashree School of Dance and Music. Balasabha school of Dance and Music, the new venture of Kudumbashree Kasaragod District Mission was inaugurated on 13 October 2018 at Cheruvathur GramaPanchayath CDS. The main aim of project was to promote artistic talents of rural children in the district. It also became the first of its kind institution started under Kudumbashree Balasabha programme for extending training on classical music and dance. The programme was launched as a joint initiative of Kudumbashree Kasaragod District Mission and Cheruvathur GramaPanchayath CDS.

The next task was to identify and appoint the best tutor who would be able to help the students nurture their artistic talents. The Kudumbashree District Mission of Kasaragod took up the responsibility of fixing a dance teacher and a music teacher. An interview was arranged to identify the right teachers and Smt. Priya was appointed as the Dance teacher who was graduated in Bharathanatyam and Smt. Aparna who was graduated in Music. Children between the age of 5 and 15 are being given training classes in dance and music. The training classes would be held at the Cheruvathoor GramaPanchayath CDS hall on every Sundays. The classes are being extended to the children absolutely free of cost.

The information about Balasabha School of Dance and Music was disseminated among the Kudumbashree members prior to the launch of the institution. And as a result, 73 children had made registrations for dance classes and 34 of the children made their registrations for the music class. The dance teacher is paid Rs 1200 per class for two batches and the music teacher is paid Rs 800 per class for one batch. Apart from the classes on Sundays, dance classes and music classes are held on public holidays as well.

Not only the children from Cheruvathoor Panchayath, children from the neighbouring Panchayaths had also got enrolled for classes and started coming for classes regularly. The dance classes are held at the Panchayath Hall of Cheruvathoor Panchayath and the Music Classes are held at the office room of the Cheruvathoor CDS simultaneously. The two batches of dance class is from 9 AM to 10 AM and from 10 AM to 11 AM. The Music class is from 10 AM to 11 AM. Children between the age of 5 and 15 are the students of Balasabha School of Dance and

Music. The Arangettam (the debut performance) of the children is yet to happen. Prior to that, the inauguration of an open air stage of Cheruvathoor Panchayath is about to be inaugurated and the panchayath had made arrangements to include the performances of the students of Balasabha School of Dance and Music during the inauguration ceremony of the Open air stage. The students are being special trained for that and extra classes are going on public holidays to prepare the students for the event.

The students are very much interested in the classes that; they don't miss out a class. Enquiries are coming to the Balasabha School of Dance and Music, whether they would start classes for musical instruments, painting and drawing. The Cheruvathoor CDS is thinking about it and the decision would be made soon regarding that. The basics of dance are being taught to the students now. As of now, the dance and music classes are being extended to girl students as no boys have enrolled for dance and music classes so far.

The ongoing classes are considered to be part of the first phase of the programme. They are also planning about the second phase of this programme, as they would get more funds for running the institution and bring the same to the next level.

A team of government officials from Mizoram including Panchayath Presidents had made their exposure visit to Cheruvathoor Panchayath and Cheruvathoor CDS during their field visits and they had found the concept of the Balasabha School of Dance and Music so interesting. They had interacted with the children, danced with them, sung with them and played with them. The team included 12 members. They had taught them the steps of Mizoram's traditional dance forms and the students even taught them the dance steps they are practising. That was a great experience for the students of Balasabha School of Dance and Music.

Scope

Though the concept of Balasabha School of Dance and Music seem to be a small one, the vision that it contains is vast and is of great relevance. To arrange opportunities for children to nurture their artistic talents, that too absolutely free of cost is something worth appreciable. Giving the upcoming generation an opportunity to nurture their artistic talents. This is an

initiative that other District Missions may also replicate and ensure the participation of the children of Balasabha into the art and cultural scenario and offer them opportunities to excel.