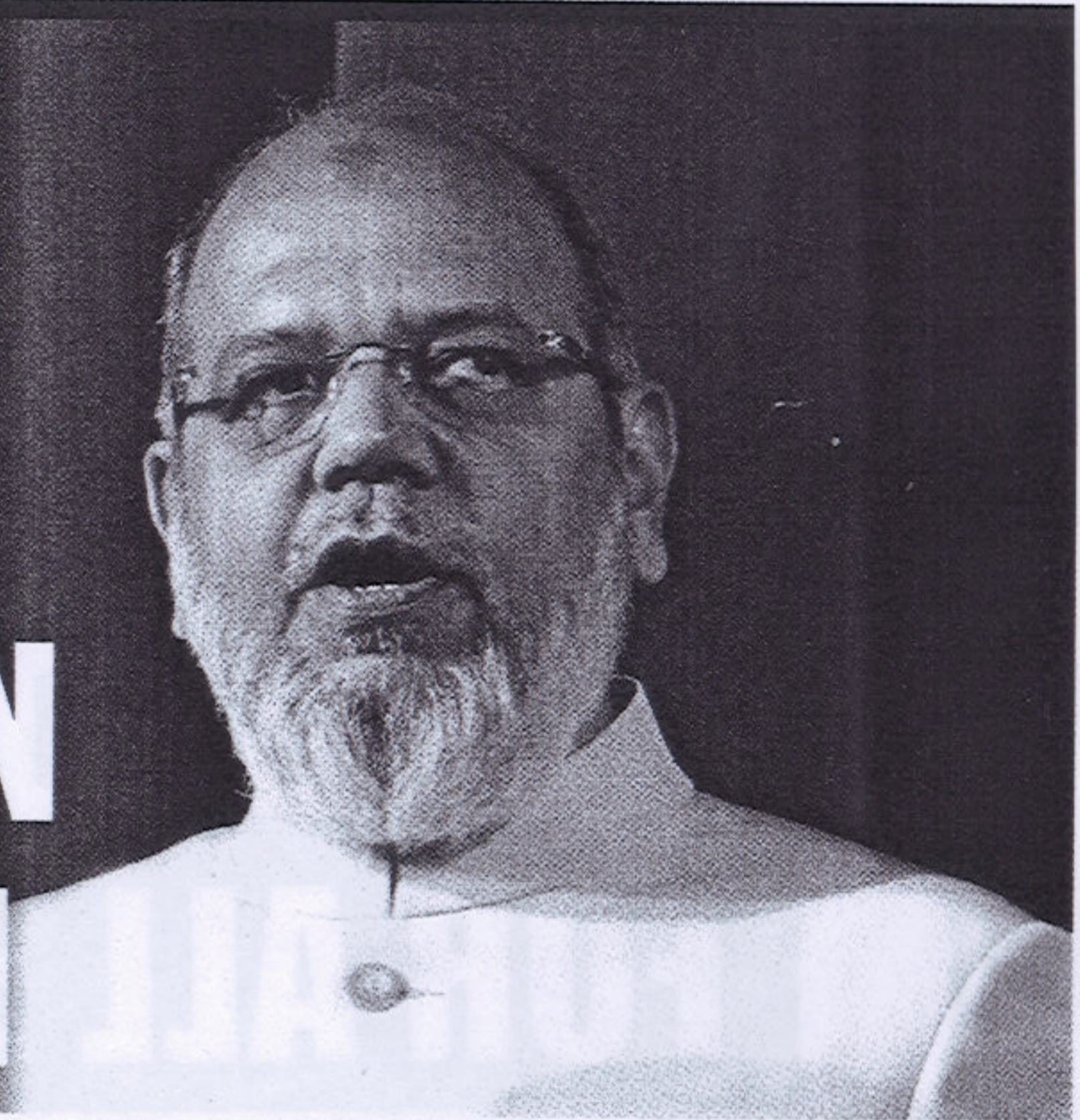




BY SYED ABDUL MUGHNI

OUR GOAL IS GOOD EDUCATION FOR ALL: FAZLANI



“The ‘Arabian Times’ has the pleasure of a tete-e-tete with Abdul Kader Fazlani, Chairman of South Bombay Public Charitable Trust, which runs the Fazlani L'Academie Globale (FLAG). It is carving a niche in the annals of education across Mumbai and, a ray of hope for the down trodden and underprivileged children, following in the trail of teaching shops mushrooming in nearly every nook and corner of Mumbai. Our best wishes for your vast contribution to the resurgence of education and weeding out the unhealthy trends corrupting the temples of learning.”

Q. When was FLAG set up?

A. Fazlani L'Academie Globale (FLAG) was set up in 2007. The Managing Committee comprises well known educationists, philanthropists and administrators. There are individuals from various fields who strongly believe in empowerment of children from poor and marginalized families through education.

Q. What are its main aims?

A. FLAG mission is to educate and nurture each child into a responsible global leader and citizen, in a warm and reflective learning environment that fosters excellence, responsibility and a love for life long learning.

Q. Is FLAG in partnership with any international organization?

A. FLAG is affiliated with the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), Geneva, for its Primary Years Programme (PYP) i.e. Nursery to grade 5, and with University of Cambridge, United Kingdom for International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) i.e. grade 6 to 10. IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) i.e. grade 11 and 12 is also available under IBO.

Q. What are the other achievements of FLAG?

A. Three years is quite a short span, yet for students of FLAG the period was full of achievements. FLAG students organized the FLAG Model United Nation (MUN) conference on the campus. This is a three-day annual event and is widely appreciated by the academic community. A big chance came our way at the inaugural Wabit Aqua Games Championships

in 2009 where FLAG students were ranked First and awarded the Championship trophy. We are proud of our students who got first place in the inaugural Inter-School Business Case Study Competition.

FLAG student, Aditi Krishnamurthy's one minute film 'Adopt a pet' bagged the best public service ad film (Age group 11-13 years) at the ICEPLEX Ad Film Awards for students. Our students took part in the child-to-child programme started by Robin Age childrens and began an association with Mumbai Mobiles Crèches (MMC) an NGO for the education of the children of construction workers.

We are full of pride for FLAG IB Diploma Students (Grade12) who gained admission in top level universities in the US, UK and Canada in business, fashion and science.

Q. Tell us about the philanthropic venture?

A. The Trust is undertaking number of philanthropic activities. The trust set up an SOS type village at Lonavala for supporting destitute children. What was needed, was to give a home-like environment to the children for a happy life. After much planning, and a lot of hardwork, the Childrens Village was started in Lonavala. Presently the village has about 100 children who are fully taken care of by our dedicated and competent staff.

Q. We have heard of your Trust helping BMC schools. Can you tell us something more of these educational ventures?

A. The BMC schools had number of deficiencies. One was the poor infrastructure, lack of books, the weak basic literacy skills among Grade 8 and 9 students who were not able to even write their names. The staff needed professional progress. One disturbing thing was the dismal pass rate of the students and 50-60% dropouts.

Q. What was done to help the drop out students?

A. For those dropouts we had to find out why they had left their studies. They earlier did not realize the importance of education or were driven out by fear of books, teachers, classmates, low marks, a subject like maths, chemistry, physics, etc. We have a standby for those who are not able or

unwilling to complete their studies.

Q. What is that standby?

A. The Trust has begun vocational courses for boys and girls conducted in association with Father Agnel Technical College and SNTD University. The vocational courses are : Air-conditioning and refrigeration, electrical wiring, fashion designing, sewing, etc. We want the students to find work, for that is one of the aims of education. If they are able to be self-reliant, they will not be misfits and idle and worried about their bread and butter. Their life will be full of a spirit of living for a cause and, not one of a misguided and complex life.

Q. What is the outcome of the survey carried out by the Trust?

A. After adoption of BMC schools the survey carried out by the Trust was to find out the reasons for the high dropout and poor pass rate. To improve the pass ratio and reduce the drop out rate, infrastructure, books, trained teachers and other facilities were provided. A sustained effort by the Trust has improved the pass ratios, with most students getting 80% to 90% marks in their final examinations.

Q. What was the next step after helping BMC School and starting the Childrens Village?

A. The Trust realized that without trained teachers it would not be an easy task to make a meaningful foray into education. To bridge this gap and to encourage girls to take up teaching profession, the Aishabai College of Education, affiliated to S.N.D.T. University, Mumbai, offering Bachelor of Education

degree for girls was opened wherein every year 100 girls pass out as trained teachers. Number of scholarships are given to deserving students to complete their education.

Q. What is the student selection procedure?

A. The admissions are granted through the Centralised Entrance Test conducted by the Director of Higher Education, Pune. Thus the admission procedure is purely merit based.

Q. What is the journey in empowering children?

A. It is a life-long journey. The journey of life never ends. It continues even after we have passed from this earth. Similarly the journey for empowerment of children never ends. It continues even after completion of education. We endeavour to ensure that no child from our school will drop out. Even if he does, the child continues the education at home. The child must not give up to a world of darkness and despair. The silver lining to the dark cloud must not be forgotten in the rush and confusion of a busy world, lost in the endless and aimless pursuit of money. The young are Mahatma Gandhi's hope and dream. His dream of teaching each child to stand on his feet and to become a good human being can be realized only through education.

We work hard to ensure that each child evolves into a global leader in the area of his choice, be it the Corporate world, Politics, Social Work or Sports. Each child has the capacity to become Mahatma Gandhi, Sachin Tendulkar and Sania Mirza of tomorrow.

Holy Quran gives youth hope and faith



Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz, the Governor of Riyadh province, patronized the final ceremony for "His Highness Prize for the Holy Quran memorization for boys and girls." The Kingdom's General Mufti Sheikh Abdulaziz al Al-Sheikh. Dr Mansour Al-Sumeih, the Prize's secretary general, spoke of close attention given by the Saudi officials to the Holy Quran. The Kingdom's General Mufti said such prizes encourage the youth to memorize the Holy Quran

