Site visit by Melli Annamalai, Asha Boston

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Deenabandhu is focused on building a Science museum. Previously, they have built a Science Park (funded by Oracle), and a Science museum (also funded by Oracle), which they are looking to expand to a much bigger space.

Jayadev is the founder of Deenabandhu Trust and one of his passions is teaching Science. He started the Deenabandhu Teacher Resource Center that has over the years created an amazing set of Science teaching materials made almost entirely of local materials. Rather than buying Science kits in the market he focused on creating materials from anything that was cheap and could be sourced locally. These are the types of Science kits that will be in the museum.

Some examples: during COVID the team came up with a telescope that was 10x cheaper. The team has also designed a crude microscope using a lens that comes in a cheap (Rs 15 or so) flashlight that magnify organisms in a few drops of water, which is then magnified using a cell phone camera, so that children can easily see what is in what we think of as clear water. The possibilities of such a crude microscope are limitless, as most schools don't have a microscope and cannot afford one. I think it is better to have a crude microscope than none at all. One of my favorites is a way to show probability: There are six containers and a bunch of tamarind seeds and a dice. Anyone passing by can roll the dice and put a tamarind seed (or some seed/bean) in a container whose number matches the number on the dice. At the end of the day all containers have approximately the same number of tamarind seeds, because there is an equal probability of getting 1 – 6 when throwing the dice. A big focus area has been electricity, magnetism, and light.

I have always been impressed these locally made Science materials. Also, where possible he uses local carpenters and craftsmen so I felt they generated employment locally as well.

On this visit we toured the site of the new building, which is adjacent to the old museum. They have raised about 50% of the total funds required, and in terms of building progress the foundation has been built. The building contractor has invested in building a very strong foundation to ensure no water leakage (in the existing building water flooded in once and damaged parts of the museum). The land is in a plot that is a bit prone to this so the strong foundation is necessary.


To give you a sense of how jam packed the spaces like these are (this proposal is to expand and build a bigger space than what they have currently, allowing more children to experience things one-on-one), here are a few pictures from earlier visits: Watching an activity in the Science Park, Queueing up to enter the Science gallery, and here is a report (my site visit) on the Science fair held on the premises a couple of years ago.