

## **Project Update: February 2003**

As you are aware, Samrakshan, in association with Asha for Education's Silicon Valley Chapter, has been running basic schools in villages in MP's Sheopur district. These have been primarily targeted at villages that have been displaced from the Kuno wildlife sanctuary, although increasingly we are also reaching out to other villages in the area that are not serviced by the state education apparatus. Local youth have been recruited as teachers and imparted basic training.

Ten such schools have been operational since January 2002. In order to mark the completion of one year of these schools and to enrich the lives of the 500 odd students (aged between 4 and 14 years) of these Asha 'shalas', a Bal Mela was organised on 25 January 2002. Students from all the schools congregated at Samrakshan's campus in Village Agraa and brought with them various models made of clay, wood and other local material. An exhibition of these models was put up along with a sports competition and a cultural presentation by each school. The children also made delightful sketches of birds and animals that they have seen around them, or have otherwise learnt about.

A report by Samrakshan's education coordinator Nimesh Ved can be read [here](#). We have reproduced Nimesh's narrative in its original form in order to give you a sense of the occasion and the atmosphere. We hope you will enjoy reading this.