

- Piping out divine music

A group of children, ages 5 -7, bright-faced and bright-eyed, a prodigiously-talented flautist and a fluent tabla maestro - the recipe for an afternoon of great enjoyment for the children of Royal Parikrma at Koramangala 8th Block.

"What would you like to call me?" asked well-known flautist Ronu Mazumdar, in Bangalore recently on a tour conducted by SPIC-MACAY. The musician volunteered a music recital to the school's children free of charge. "Bhaiyya?" "Anna?" asked two youngsters tentatively of the musician who volunteered his music-recital cum class free to Royal Parikrma. "I'm learning new terms," commented Mazumdar. "This is the first time I'm being called *Anna*. I'm usually called *Dada*". The amusement and charming banter of the children gave way to pure pleasure with Ronu Mazumdar's bold rendition of *Raag Bhim Palasi*.

"What do you think about when you are playing?" asked a curious youngster. "What did you think of when you were listening to my music?" was Mazumdar's counter query. The boy thought for a bit, then said: "I felt like sleeping and dancing both together." Mazumdar got the point, "I too feel the same way," he said, explaining his passion to a school of children from backgrounds of extreme poverty, family trouble, violence, isolation and alienation.

The Parikrma Foundation's CEO, Ms. Shukla Bose, says: "Sometimes I find myself marveling at the amazing talent of these children, most of whom don't even have a roof over their heads." The Royal Parikrma is one of two schools run by the foundation for children who do not have the opportunity of going to school. Ronu Mazumdar arranged for a city-based student of his to give tabla and flute lessons to the children. "Take a PVC pipe flute-sized. It costs about Rs. 10, punch holes into it the same way as in a flute and play," was his parting gift to the children. The Parikrma Foundation would be very grateful for donations, cash or kind. Contact Ms. Bose at 080- 3635225.