



A skit by the school students (left) and a puppet show were part of the entertainment.

Education with a Social

AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

ANYTHING that happens at the Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre at Agargaon is bound to be a grand affair and last Friday was no exception. Sir John Wilson School celebrated its 10th birthday at the magnificent auditorium of the centre impressing the audience with a delightful cultural show. Skits, songs, dance and an amusing puppet show by artist Mustafa Monwar and his troupe entertained the audience that included parents of the school as well as students. But the grandeur of the event, which had a host of generous sponsors, does not lie in the flamboyant venue or the colourful performances. It would have been an ordinary school celebration had it not been for the fact that this is a school that carries with it a huge social responsibility. Being a project of a charitable organisation, the school has the added task of raising funds to prevent and treat disability. The school also carries the name of a remarkable visionary, Sir John Wilson, a blind man who devoted his entire life to help the disabled and to stop avoidable disability. The school's challenge for the future is to educate its students and imbibe values of charity and patriotism while at the same time raise enough funds for the noble causes of its parent organisation IMPACT Foundation.

Ten years ago, Sir John Wilson School started its first faltering steps with only nine students, a handful of staff members and a deeply committed British principal Sarah Streeton. Today it has 580 students and 70 staff members. Some of the teachers such as Sabrina Shaheed, now vice-principal and Mahfuza Khatun on the administration side, have been with the school since the very beginning and have been instrumental in making the school a reputable institution. It is a regular English Medium School following the British National Curriculum up to the Ordinary Levels. Class size is limited to 20 students per classroom and emphasis is given on working independently and thinking creatively. But students are also sensitised about their surrounding environment, about people far less privileged than them and about those who are disabled and in need of help. They are encouraged to raise funds to help the needy and visits have been arranged for students to visit charitable projects. Last academic year, for instance, students from class 6 to class 9 went to visit Jibon Tori, Bangladesh's first floating hospital that reaches patients in the remotest areas and is one of the innovative projects of IMPACT Foundation.

IMPACT Foundation is an UK Based international charity that specialises in helping disabled people and the poor. Its founder, Sir John Wilson whose birthday coincided with the school's day of celebrating its 10th anniversary, lost his

It would have been an ordinary school celebration had it not been for the fact that this is a school that carries with it a huge social responsibility.



Sabrina Shaheed, vice principal and head of the junior section has been with the school from the beginning.