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FOR THE YOUNG ONES

The Hitavada

# Twinkle

STAR 

Balranjan  
Children's  
Drama  
Group  
Par  
excellence



"Actors are born and not made" is the general opinion. But Balranjan has shown to the world that a child with enthusiasum, talent and a zest for hard work can reach the top. At least in the acting field. "One look and a minute's talk and we can find the potential," says Sanjay Pendse, who has produced and directed several plays for Balranjan. Balranjan was born twenty years back when it split from its parent Ranjan Kala Mandir when the need for a special children's wing was felt.

Since its inception, twenty seven full length plays, nineteen one act plays and several other items have been presented by the members

of the Balranjan group. Almost every child who has shown interest in acting has been given the opportunity to participate in a play. "We practice for long hours and it is

hard work, but we also enjoy it and the children enthusiasitically participate." The Balranjan plays have been staged at several other places like Bombay, Nashik, Bhopal, Ratnagiri, Indore and Pune. And have won several prizes in state level competitions almost in a row till they withdrew to give others a chance.

Marathi dramas like "Aamhi shalleth janar nahi," the recent, "Durga jhali Gouri" and others have been recently staged. "Adrushya manav", "The great golden gang" were staged in Hindi. Almost every Marathi writer in and around Nagpur has contributed to stories for

## ON THE WINGS OF PERFECTION

Balranjan's dramas. "Just a story is not enough," smiles Pendse. "We have to see it from the production side also."

The school routine, the holidays, the practice sessions have all to be planned well in advance. "Only after about five presentations do the actors really get into the skine of the character they play.

We only explain the role to



them leaving them to interpret it as they wish." For example in the play, "Dyaniyancha Raja", the lead child had to be respect inspiring. He had to be intelligent and look intelligent and serene. In the four sessions of the play that was depicteds different ninth standard Dynaeshwars were chosen, and in the tenth standard all four of them stood in merit.

Similarly other aspects have also to be considered. Like the title of the drama. "When we told people the title, 'Aamhi shallet janar nahi', they misunderstood and did not feel that this drama was suitable. But actually it, as all our other dramas do,

conveyed subtly important msages to the audience. They do not preach but certain advice and good thoughts are conveyed."

The dramas need a lot of preparations like the settings, the dresses and other things. Balranjan has a team of specialists in the field. Atula Patwardhan, Prabhakar Chaudhari, Prakash Kshirsagar, Shubhada Phadnavis, Sunil Budhe and several others form the team that have made Balranjan the pioneer in the field.

"Drama should be a part of education," says Pendse, "Like drawing and music and craft, drama should also be a part of the curriculu-

m." One of the future projects of Balranjan is to have blind children as the artistes. "They should also get a chance," is what they feel. "And we should like to make a dance drama on the Chipko movement in the near future. the title would probably be, "Vruksha valli aamha soyari."

One of finest plays has been P. L. Deshpande's "Nav Gokul," which was telecast on TV and was even sent to Germany. Artistes like Amol Palekar and others have been visitors and special guests for some of Balranjan's plays.

