

ASTME

Commonwealth Association of Science, Technology and Mathematics Educators

e-Newsletter - Commonwealth Year of Science and Technology 2010

Number 2

<http://www.castme.org>

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Editorial

This electronic newsletter is published three times per year and is disseminated to anyone interested in Science, Technology or Mathematics education in a Commonwealth context. The first edition published in January was well received and was distributed by email to an ever increasing readership. If you are reading this second edition, and would like to receive the January edition, please send your name and email address to: j.g.ling@btinternet.com.

Commonwealth Day 2010

Science, Technology and Society

This was the theme for Commonwealth Day this year, celebrated on 8th March: a theme that was apt and extremely relevant to CASTME.

It points us to the importance of science and technology to the quality of life of all Commonwealth citizens. The concept was used to design a wide range of activities, such as debates, lectures and displays and carried forward through events in so many different ways around the world in many commonwealth countries: in cultural, academic, political and other venues and institutions. CASTME's treasurer Dr David Moore, carried the flag at the Commonwealth Day service at Westminster Abbey.

See: <http://www.sci-tech-soc.org>

Commonwealth Day in Malta

What is Science and Technology to you?

This question was used in a survey of young people in Malta using the important theme of Commonwealth Day. Responses varied considerably. Two examples from the hundreds of replies were:

Boy (14): We have made a lot of improvements thanks to science and technology but there is more to come because this is something ongoing. New inventions are being made right now. I wish I could invent something one day that would be beneficial for the whole world.

Girl (14): Science and technology are ways to explain the universe and the world around us. With these we can find out how the world has been shaped and also provide modern technologies that make our lives better. All this gives us great benefits and a higher standard of living. Unfortunately it also provides pollution with all the modern technology we have nowadays all this is getting destroyed and a better world is being created for our future.

CEY in Sreepur Village Bangladesh

Sue Dale Tunnicliffe

Salma, the facilitator is designing trails around the grounds of everyday science and takes groups of interested mothers around with the intention that they will train other mothers to take groups of children or go on their own. The management team intends to award women who are interested in the status of leader. These women will wear green and red saris as opposed to plain blue ones. Leaders are paid a little more than the usual daily allowance that women earn through working in the activities like paper making, sewing on the project. They say it really has increased their self-esteem.



Salma is running sessions for children and interested mothers of hands on science using everyday items. CASTME certificates of participation are being presented to members of the group, women who have never had a certificate for anything before!

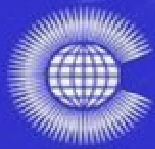
The Management team think they will perhaps be able to get some funding in the future for this part working in conjunction with their public health team to look at the science of hygiene. Because they eat with their right hand washing is crucial: their left hand is used for cleansing after excretion. They want the new teacher they are to appoint in their school to follow an everyday hands-on science method of learning for the children.

Diet is important, especially because breast feeding is the norm with women tending to stop thinking that bottle feeding is better.



Cases of malnourished babies exist because young mothers do not understand such issues as disease, immunisation, reproduction, child development and adolescence. Educating them is best developed from a science stance as opposed to just being

told, which is not working: of vital importance in Bangladesh!



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Mauritius and CASTME hit it off!

Launched in January by CASTME Chair *Colin Matheson*, CASTME (Mauritius), is organizing five activities:

1 **An Innovative Primary School Teacher (IPST)**

Award for primary school teachers who are demonstrating exceptional qualities in teaching science or mathematics at primary level. The innovative teacher should show passion for scientific inquiry in the classroom with the intention that pupils will benefit fully during the lessons and throughout the course of their lives. Submission will be in the form of a project (supported by evidence) with the following elements, amongst others:

- Learner centred strategies - these strategies should help pupils to construct purposeful knowledge
- Use of multimedia.
- Collaboration among teachers/stakeholders.
- Out of school elements



Colin Matheson interviewed

Primary Schools were invited to participate in April 2010 and the deadline for submission is 23 September.

2 **A competition for primary school pupils** at upper primary level (Standards V and VI) involves groups of four (two boys and two girls) thoroughly investigating a school compound problem related to any one of the following:

- Health issues (e.g., hygiene, nutrition, diseases, dental care)
- The immediate environment – pollution, minimizing wastage
- Safety
- Drinking water
- Energy-saving measures

3 **A Physics Olympiad and a Biology Olympiad** in conjunction with science subject teaching associations,

4 **A Quiz Competition for Students** of Form IV on science, mathematics and technology using mobile phones.

5 **The production of short films** to illustrate science and technology concepts.

Two **CASTME Westminster Scholarships** were awarded in Mauritius in March: both to young women with first class degrees in engineering. See: www.westminster.ac.uk

Editor's Note:

The next edition of this newsletter will be published in October. Please send requested articles to Jonathan Ling at: j.g.ling@btinternet.com by Friday 24th September 2010.

Attaining our Goals

CASTME continues to work towards the two Millennium Development Goals, important to its work::

- Achieve Universal Primary Education
- Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

See: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

The WorldSTE2010 conference

A reminder!

This is to be held in Tartu, Estonia, 28 June to 2 July 2010 on the theme 'Innovations in Science and Technology Education: Research, Policy, Practice'.

Details are available on:

www.icase2010.org or on www.icaseonline.net.

CASTME and the IET India

Mike Morrissey, the Head of International Operations at the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) and Shekhar Sanyal, the Country Head for IET India, based in Bangalore, would be delighted to work with CASTME to further the cause of science, technology and mathematics in India. Shekhar has asked CASTME to share with him its plans for India and asks in what way the IET in India could support in realizing those plans.

CASTME-Asia

CASTME-Asia was established at a conference held in Goa in February 2001. Since then, the Secretary, Sudhakar Agarkar, has been helping to bring out the CASTME journal and has been encouraging teachers and teacher educators from Asia to submit projects for CASTME awards. A workshop was run to develop a technology curriculum for Asian schools.

Although the activities of CASTME-Asia are moving at a slow speed there is an active group devoted to work for this organization with a membership of about 200. They are now thinking of organising a workshop on mathematics education in collaboration with Association for Mathematics Teachers of India (AMTI).

Sudhakar is Professor of Science Education at the Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (HBCSE), a national centre of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai. He has conducted research in the learning difficulties faced by socially deprived students and has designed appropriate remedial measures to overcome them. Presently, he is engaged in designing Open Educational Resources for Schools (OER4S).

CASTME website: <http://www.castme.org>