Ducks win Hearts

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When we were waiting for the ‘Team Duck’ to arrive we were bit apprehensive about hosting them in an area where they were going to face language and culture barriers apart from food and hygiene standards. But the students from UK broke all barriers and took to Indian ways like a fish takes to water. They not only picked up Kho-Kho (A rural Indian game) quite fast but also perfected the steps of Naati (Himachal’s folk dance). They enjoyed jalebi and chai the most. Jalebi was such a favorite with the British students that whenever they posed for photographs they would say Jalebi instead of Cheese. We were worried if the British students will be able to work with the standard Indian equipments which they have probably never even seen before but they quickly learnt to use the Indian shovels, picks, sickle etc. Being foreign students they attracted lots of attention and were bit uncomfortable in the beginning and soon got used to it and made lots of friends in the local school.
The locals were skeptical about the visitors and thought they won't be able to work but the team proved everyone wrong. The team developed nice rapport with the villagers and everyone was all praises for the visitors. When they left today most of the students skipped their morning assembly to bid farewell to the Ducks. Students departed the British with heavy hearts and we wished we could extend the project work by a few more days. We would also like to extend our thanks to World Challenge for appointing us the hosts for the project work, HK Sarwata, DFO Karsog and all staff of forest Department for their whole hearted support; Principal, staff and students of GSSS Seri Banglow; media for giving us wide coverage in the newspapers. We express our sincere gratitude to 'Team Duck' for donating the equipments to School lab.

**Divya Himachal August 7, 2010**