

On the 60th year of the bereavement of Mahatma Gandhiji which fell on 30th January 2008 and which also happened to be the **World Martyr's Day**, Yi [Coimbatore Chapter] along with the Shanthi Ashram organized a series of events to remember the great soul and his values. There were various programmes held through out the day to involve the Youth through different activities at various places around the city.

The day started with "Anjali", an activity that was designed to pay tributes to the great leader. Fortunately, Coimbatore is one of the cities that received the ashes of Gandhiji and it is being kept in a place called Perur about 20 kilometers away from the main city of Coimbatore along the banks of the river Noyyal. The programme started with bhajans and songs by the net students and students from the Coimbatore Music School. After the Bhajans, there was a two minute silence that was observed to pay respects to the leader, following which there was a small speech by **Advocate Kuppuswamy**, who spoke on "Gandhism in modern times". His speech was very inspiring and motivating to the net students as he recalled the time when he met Gandhiji at Coimbatore. His speech could be summarized in one line, which was, "Death is a normal incident in our lives and it actually means that someone has left us and will be forgotten in the years to come, but God gives us some people from time to time who live beyond death and whose values remain forever. Gandhiji was one such miracle" he said.

Mr Shankar Vanavarayar, Chair, Young Indians [Coimbatore Chapter] spoke on the need and importance of this generation to know the life of Gandhiji and how he, as one man, brought an entire country to fight and succeed in its quest for independence. He also said Young Indians will continue to help Shanti Ashram in anyways to promote the life of Gandhiji and said the very fact that Gandhi is still being talked about was in itself a good change in the youth today.

After the speech, each one of them placed flowers on the Samadhi of Gandhiji's ashes. After the "Anjali" programme, Yi organized various programmes at places of Gandhian significance in the city, which included the Gandhi Museum, The Gandhi Memorial School, The Gandhi Study Centres at the Krishnammal College for Women and the Avinisahilingam University and at a spot where Gandhi planted a tree in 1934 during one of his visits to this city. The Yi members assembled at the tree at 5 pm and had a two minute silence at 5.20 pm in front of tree, which denoted the time that Gandhiji was shot 60 years before at Delhi. After the silence, Yi and Shanti Ashram distributed 60 tree saplings to the representatives of 60 schools in Coimbatore, requesting them to plant it in their campus and ensure its growth.

In the evening, there was a cultural show at the Mani's Higher Secondary School auditorium along with a very inspirational address by **Dr B K Krishnaraj Vanavarayar**, Chairman, Bharatiya Vidhya Bhavan [Coimbatore Kendra] who spoke about the values that Gandhi stood for and for what he is still remembered: Sarvodayam, Antoyadayam, Sakthi, Poornam, Shanti and Satyam. He insisted that each parents ensure that their children read the autobiography of Gandhi titled, "My experiments with Truth". Dr Vanavarayar highlighted some key points of Gandhi's life that made great and the world look at him, like the one in which Gandhi says that his Life is a message by itself. He said Coimbatore was indeed very fortunate to have had Gandhiji three times but lamented that none of them were aware of this nor the fact that his ashes were in the vicinity and that the tree

that he planned still remains healthy. After the speech by Dr Vanavarayar, there was a dance performance that depicted the life of Gandhiji, his struggles and hurdles.