

## Community Health conducts summer camps at Jawadhi

The Department of Community Health recently conducted their annual summer camps in the hills of Jawadhi, for the children enrolled in the evening study centres, in collaboration with the Don Bosco Tribal Development Centre. There were 785 children enrolled for the camps that were held in six different locations simultaneously, from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of May.



Every day the children were engaged in a different activity, by several teams of staff from CMC and Don Bosco. Camp started at 8:30 and finished at 4 pm, and the children were given refreshments mid-morning and evening, as well as lunch. Lunch and snacks were prepared on site.

This year, the children were taught to make things out of discarded materials by a craft teacher from Chennai. They also learnt folk arts, dancing and traditional songs, the identification and uses of common forest herbs, and about forest conservation. For half a day, they were treated to a magic show. Many of them had never seen one before. There was also a short workshop on life skills and coping with stress.

A nutritionist spoke to the children of the importance of good nutrition, and how a good balanced meal was possible using only food produce from the hills.



All children had a medical check-up. Children who needed further medical attention were referred to CMC, with treatment to be coordinated by CHAD. Some of the referrals were seven children with valvular heart disease, two with osteomyelitis, three



with seizure disorders, and two, with suspected tuberculosis. There were also many children with refractive errors and three with Bitot spots.

The camp was possible because of enthusiastic participation from CMC Vellore and Don Bosco. Others involved were the Forest Department, a *siddha* doctor and his team, a magician, a folk arts trainer, a craft teacher and volunteers. The summer camps and the activities of the evening study centres are supported by donations from FOVs, mainly Germany, Sweden, the United States and Australia.