

# Flying kites lifts their spirits

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**COIMBATORE:** Ten-year-old K.S. Hariprasad was in a jubilant mood after having tried his hands at flying a kite that he had made with the help of his elder brother. He had his eyes on the colourful kites of all shapes and hues flying high as his brother wheeled him around.

The kite festival was organised as part of a programme for children affected with duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD), a genetic disorder characterised by degeneration of muscle tissues, by Molecular Diagnostics, Counselling, Care and Research Centre (MDCRC) at CODISSIA Trade Fair Complex on Saturday.

Awareness sessions on immunisation for children affected with DMD, physiotherapy and the role of genetic counselling in preventing the disease were held at Kurunji Hospital as part of the one-day programme.

The free multidisciplinary clinical care programme initiated under the National Rural Health Mission project covered Coimbatore, Tirupur,



*A boy trying to fly a kite with the help of a volunteer at a 'Fun-evening with Kites' for children affected by DMD organised by Molecular Diagnostics, Counselling, Care and Research Centre in the city on Saturday. — PHOTO: K. ANANTHAN*

Dharapuram, Erode and Salem districts. As many as 40 children affected with DMD and their parents and rela-

tives from these districts took part in the event.

Director of MDCRC B.R. Lakshmi, said "multidisciplinary care involved paediatrics, neurology, orthopaedics, pulmonology and cardiology. Molecular genetic diagnosis had a crucial role in identifying and preventing this incurable disease and in contributing to medical research."

DMD is a recessive disorder caused by mutation of X chromosomes thereby resulting in males inheriting the disease while females acted as carriers. The symptoms were identified in early infancy and resulted in gradual paralysis leading to death of the patients in their early 20s, explained Dr. Lakshmi.

According to her, as many as 1,500 children affected with DMD were identified and treated under the programme. President of The Coimbatore District Small Industries Association K.V. Ganapathi, Director of National Adventure and Leadership School were the guests for the event. Members of Kite Life Foundation, Kerala, conducted the kite-flying session.