

May 17, 1999
(Around 4 pm)

I wanted to see the kiosk, and had gone outside with every intention of doing that. But the minute I reached the gate I realised I didn't even know where it was. So I asked one of the children at the chai wala outside the NIIT gate where the computer in the wall was (I added 'in the wall' because I wasn't sure if they would know it as a computer). He immediately pointed in the right direction. I asked him if he would come along with me to play on it and he said, "*Abhi kaam karna hai*". If it hadn't been for his work he would have come along. Anyway, I finally saw the tricolor cover on the wall and went up to it. Lifted it up – saw the opening screen (the home page) and tried to click something. The machine had possibly hung because absolutely nothing happened (except for the cursor moving). Saw a little kid coming towards me – or maybe he saw me and was making his way to me anyway – and asked him how to operate the computer. He walked up to it, clicked around a few times, decided it wasn't behaving the way it should and said – "*abhi nahi chal raha*". And that was that. Asked him his name (Ankit/Sonu), told him mine, and said I'd meet him some other time.

May 20, 1999

When I walked up initially (5:15 pm) there were two kids at the kiosk using Paint. Kamlesh (8 yrs) and Ankit (7 yrs) were standing together but it was obviously Kamlesh's turn (because he was bigger?) so he was doing everything while the other watched. There was no kind of aggression, or fight about who would go first. I asked if they ever fought or argued about taking turns and A said they did but weren't doing so just then because no one else was there.

I asked A how long he'd been playing with it – he said the very first day that it had been put up. But he didn't remember when it was exactly except that it was two three months back and that it was winter.

When a couple of older kids came (about 14 – 15 yrs, oldish teenagers basically – well dressed), they got aggressive and looked like they wanted to push the younger ones away – but that was probably just to bug them because after a minute or so they went away. Talked to one of them (Deepak). Since I'd overheard the more aggressive one in their group say something about "*mera computer*", I asked Deepak if he had a computer at home. Although his cousin (the aggressive one) had a computer, he didn't, but he said that he went to a school where they 'learnt computers' so he didn't need to work with this one. He also said that the one in his school had a mouse. He didn't hear or didn't respond to my question if the touch-pad on this one was more fun to use than the mouse.

While working on Paint, A started off with totally random squiggles with whatever color and brush he had. Then he erased everything and started to draw lines and boxes and more geometrical figures (possibly because they look neater and are easier to do). Tried to draw a box using lines but didn't get it perfect. While he was filling color in the very small areas, he would drag the Fill Bucket over to the area, but would not get it right because the tip of the bucket would not be inside the area to be filled. Finally, he got a blank screen by clicking on the zoom button (because then that area went out of the area under view). He possibly doesn't really understand how the zoom tool works, and is interested only in the end result (in this case a blank screen), i.e. a tool is used depending on its immediate effect – not because they have thought out what the tool might be for (from its icon or by testing it under other circumstances). While erasing, A knew how to get a larger or a smaller eraser and knew how to view the areas not visible using the scroll bars.

Most of the smaller kids go to a private English medium school – Ready Go Welfare School while some of the older ones attended the Govt. school within seventy yards of the kiosk (one kid said that it was known for the number of murders that happened there after school hours).

An hour or so later, Rajender (8 yrs), acknowledged by everyone present as being one of the best users ("*woh number one par hai, mai number two par hoon*"), walked up and started chatting. There is a possible correlation with the fact that he was also the best dressed and the cleanest among all of the other slum kids present. There didn't seem to be any animosity towards him because he was better than the others, rather, there was more respect. When he said he would show me what he had made the

others made place for him at the kiosk. R was obviously very comfortable with the windows interface and didn't seem to like the clutter of having several windows open on the task bar at the same time (quite like most experienced fussy users) and proceeded to shut them before doing anything else! He was also reading the English menu items and buttons quite well. I asked him to take me to the internet which he did (by going to the Disney channel) but he added that earlier lots more used to come which didn't any more – "*ud gaya*". I noticed there was no start page being loaded, and made a note to check with the rest of the team.

R had been learning about making web pages from Renu. He opened FrontPage and showed me how to insert pictures and horizontal lines. He even showed me previews of the animated gifs that he had inserted. But the most fascinating thing was watching him figure out how to enter text in FrontPage. A lot of the kids knew how to insert text using the character map as did R. But I don't think that they have hit upon the fact that text from the map can be copied and pasted into any windows program. A question that springs to mind is that do they even identify with what a program is (in some terminology of their own?)

Anyway, he chanced upon 'Insert->Symbol' in the menu (possibly because he knew how to 'Insert->Image') and that gave him a box similar to the C Map in its layout. However since this dialog box only selects one character at a time (unlike C Map which lets you select a whole string), he only got RRRRR whenever he pressed Insert (the last R in his name). He stopped, looked at the box for a minute or so, then quickly cut out the Rs and this time pressed 'R' "Insert" "A" 'Insert' and so on... till he got his name in FrontPage without a single keystroke! Sher Singh, who had been watching over his shoulder, said he had also understood and tried it out himself – getting the order of letters in his name wrong in the process but performing the steps correctly. They learn very fast from each other.

There were three really old boys (men?) who were sitting near the kiosk for almost an hour but they never tried to do anything – not even play music. However they weren't the aggressive interfering kind. I think one of them, Umesh, was the older brother of one of the younger ones.

May 24, 1999

5:05 pm

It was miserably hot and muggy when I walked outside to the kiosk. Babbu (4 ½), Babloo (5) and Sona were at it even in that weather. They were trying to use Paint but at the moment when I walked up – nothing was working (there was a mean looking window which said "application error, generating log" or words to that effect). For a moment I thought these kids were lucky they didn't know what the message meant or Microsoft would have had some of its youngest detractors. They tried to close the window but the cursor didn't change from a pencil and nothing happened. Finally went inside to reboot the machine (I even went down to find out the username and password but that wasn't needed as it came on without it). I got the feeling that these kids (whom I hadn't met before and chatted to) thought I wasn't much use until I actually went inside and got the machine to work again.

After it came back on, Sona said "*Abhi nahi chalega, raat ko theek se chalega*". I said this wasn't a TV was it, and she said it was – we left it that.

Ankit made a real show of an entry at 525 charging up to the kiosk. Reached straight for the closed cover (closed because I had just got back from restarting it and the other kids had left by then). And put on music (in the background to work by – very professional!)

Clicking randomy – went to internet explorer – and the taskbar

There was a guy in a cap who was older than the 'regulars'. I think he was about 11 or 12 years old. he seemed to know his way around a bit. When he wanted a new song he started from Start and tried to go through Documents but didn't find it. Then he wanted to delete all the folders that were on the desktop but try as hard as he could, he couldn't drag them all into the recycle bin, even though he was able to select them. I think the catch was that he couldn't figure out what among all the moving things would go into the bin or maybe he couldn't find the bin because its icon and location had changed.

I was standing right behind them scribbling everything that I thought I would have a tough time recalling (esp who said what, when etc) but by now everyone is used to it. They've stopped asking '*kya likh rahe ho*' and saying '*aap hamare naam likh rahe ho aur hum kya karte hain*' – which is fine considering they initially thought I was a reporter (on the first or second day).

Rajkumar (an older kid, about 12 I think) said he would rather play 'bat ball' anyday, and anyway only 'kids' played with the computer all day. I have a feeling that he's reached the age where the peer group is more important than a new toy. Anyway, he also blamed the other kids (who don't know '*daabna*') for breaking the cover hook.

I asked him what all he could do with the computer so he set about showing me Kahaniyan in Nai Duniya (the online magazine). He had obviously been around the site a bit because he knew exactly where to find what – he told me that news from old times was also available and that when the *dumroo* (hourglass) started turning over that meant '*kaam kar raha hai*'. On the net, he also showed me the Hanuman Chalisa (and read it out very well) and a picture of shiv-parvati which he insisted on saving for me. He also knew that trying to save it before it had loaded would be no use because he tried to select the picture but the Save As was greyed out. Save As is something they all know about possibly because at some stage they realised the need to save their work. Unfortunately they haven't figured out that files can have meaningful names. With the image from the net there was a default file name but when they eork in Paint to create a file, Untitled.bmp invariably gets over written – so someone else's work gets destroyed. I think naming a file in the dialog box will have to be a separate intervention (i.e they may not pick this up entirely on their own without us relating it to any prior experiences). Interestingly, he also said that if the picture is got everyday, then it comes faster (an intuitive idea of a cache?).

I also asked if he could have more than one *khidki* to look at the net. He said it was possible to start a different window with different content but didn't think that there could be more than one at the same time.

I asked him when he had started playing with the computer. He said he didn't use it the first few days after it had been put up because he though '*paise lagenge*'. Once he realised that it was for everyone, he started to play with it.

Proceeded to click around randomly in FrontPage, there was no pattern to what he was doing. Or at least none that I could see. However, he did know about screen savers. How to start the Mystify Your Mind, set its speed, and how to run it (preview it) – he didn't actually set the screen saver so I don't think he knows what its for.

Sher Singh came along a little while later. After the first few days when we used to forget each other's names, I think I get along quite well with him now. He opened one of the many bitmaps lying on the desktop (at any given time there are about 7 to 10 bitmaps and about 30 to 40 folders on the desktop, but they don't seem to distract anyone). But after opening it he said, "*Yeh to Sanjay ki hai*", and proceeded to open another one... so there is some idea of respecting someone else's creation or maybe that's a privilege reserved only for Sanjay because he is acknowledged as one of the better computer walas. Sanjay, according to one of the kids, came everyday for about 1 or 2 hours after 8 pm.

All this while, the cover which the locals had put up on the computer kept dropping down because the hook into which the chain was supposed to fit was missing and whoever was holding it up would obviously tire. According to the kids, some 'bad' children kept breaking the hook off. Just then, as Ankit (Sonu) was putting his finger through the hole in the cover, I slipped the chain around it. His immediate reaction was to go and look for a small stick and slip it into place. So that problem has been solved since then, because whenever a stick breaks or is lost, a new one is bunged into place.

Today was flag day on Paint – Sher Singh made a few, one in the right colors and a few psychedelic ones as well. A flag is a nice thing to draw on a comp because it is geometric and when you fill colors uniformly, it looks good, better than when you do it on paper. SS didn't have any problems drawing the outlines in pink and then coloring it. Most kids would have used only black for the outlines.

Started chatting to Jeetender (Monu) who didn't seem to be a regular. He didn't look older but he sort of acted it. When I asked him what he did most of the time he said he played cricket and didn't know how to use the computer.

By this time SS had started to use the Bezier curve tool in Paint. Even if he hadn't figured out exactly how the Bezier curves points should be placed to get a particular curve, he knew how to manipulate it and said he liked making the line dance. Made a very neat mountaintop using the curve while creating a 'classic' kiddie picture (mountains, clouds, the sun, a river and houses).

A girl came up and started trying out a few things on Paint. Asked her her name. She said it was Anita (9 ½ years old, Ready Go School) and that she didn't know anything about the computer. However when she started to draw on Paint she seemed quite comfortable with the mouse and the tools. Unlike the other kids who tend to draw using the line and shape tools to get a neat picture, she just used very bold freehand strokes which looked good even if it was totally abstract. When she was rubbing the picture out strategically I was impressed because I thought she was trying a new art technique. But then she went on to rub everything out painstakingly, one little stroke at a time, so I'm not to sure!

By this time the sun had gone below the level of the houses opposite the kiosk so it wasn't as hot as it had been, and activity at the kiosk picked up. There were more kids playing in the vacant lot as well, so I suppose the kiosk was not high priority for them or maybe it was just that they didn't want to be part of a big crowd. Will talk to the other kids sometime and see what they like / don't like.

Back to Paint: all of them know that to change the color of the brush or the line they need to left click on another color in the palette below, but when it comes to drawing rectangles, they wonder why it doesn't work. I don't think they've figured out the background color concept and how that can be changed by right clicking. So when Anita had to draw a blue rectangle, she first drew it in white and then filled it with blue. By the way, the Spray Can tool is called '*machhar ki dawai*'. When Sher Singh came back a little while later, he started to work on Paint as well. I don't think he realised he was working in a high zoom mode because he said "Why is this line so large". He also really liked moving the Paint Toolbox around all over the screen and insisted on showing this to me for some reason.

All in all I don't think anyone tried anything new today. The AC in the kiosk is still not working and everything inside was getting really hot.

May 27, 1999

Around 5 pm there was someone whom I hadn't seen before, Raghunath. He was standing there with another pal of his and had loaded a new song (if I had heard '*Aati kya Khandala*' one more time I would have freaked). When the 'regulars' came up a little while later – Sher Singh, Sunil and Chandan, these two went away.

The comp was getting stuck and nothing was happening when they tried to click buttons. One of them said if you keep pressing the buttons it eventually becomes alright. As it happened he was right – it did get ok. But I wonder why it was hanging in the first place – too much memory being used because of all the open windows or something?

I asked SS if he would use FrontPage like he had the other day. He launched it and I asked him to write his name. He said he had to see how it was written so I wrote it out in caps in my notebook. The way he started character map was interesting. First he did a Find Files and Folders, for the whole of C Drive, and then in the huge list that followed, he found the charmap application by its icon. That was quite amazing because he can barely write his own name so he wasn't using the name of the application. None of them actually use the Start-> Program-> Accessories route to get to either charmap or Paint. SS wrote his name in charmap but then didn't do a copy before going to FrontPage so he didn't get anywhere. He finally got it after fooling around a little bit.

I noticed that none of them close windows, they all minimize them, except maybe Rajender.

I asked them if they would find the cricket score for me (I was trying to see if they could 'find' things as such or did they always browse totally randomly). They went all over the place even into Outlook Express and the like. So I suppose this lot was not as well versed in the ways of the web... also realised in the process that the net wasn't working.

A little later when one of the others was trying to hit the touchpad, Sunil got all protective and covered it with his hands so there is some amount of ownership and responsibility especially among the kids who live closest to the kiosk.

I went inside and asked Vivek why there was no net access so he took a look and said that that was because someone had changed some settings. When he rebooted the comp the keyboard kept hanging. There wasn't much that could be done that evening since it was already past 6:30 pm so he said he'd take a look at it tomorrow.

May 30, 1999

I thought it would be interesting to see whether a Sunday afternoon made any difference to the way the kiosk was used, for example, if there were more older people around. Sundays wouldn't have made a difference to the smaller kids because they were anyway on vacation. However, when I got there at 2 pm, there was no one near the kiosk. The computer looked like it had hung, and I couldn't even reboot it because access to the kiosk from inside NIIT was locked. So much for Sunday afternoon observations!

June 1, 1999

It was very hot (it usually is in Delhi in June at quarter to three in the afternoon) but there were still a couple of kids at the kiosk – Kamlesh (slightly older, a bit of a bully, I had seen him before) and Sandeep. K was working on Paint when I got there and was very particular about drawing absolutely perfect rectangles. The reason why he was having a tough time doing that was because he was using the rect tool to draw lines not rectangles.

When he drew a line accidentally in a part of the picture, Sonu (older kid, in the 4th) said 'cut kar de' and then showed him how to use the Undo option in the Edit menu. Most of the other kids would have tried to rub out the mistake. Sonu is a school dropout – looks after the shop next to the gate – says he doesn't get much time on the camp because he's working and when he's free these other kids don't leave him with much time. Sonu used the rect tool for drawing rectangles when his turn came. He went on to draw a fairly detailed house with realistic colors. I asked everyone who was standing there if they liked drawing otherwise. They said Saturday's are for drawing on paper in school – but nobody draws during holidays – 'kaun banata hai?'. Perhaps these kids perceive it as work. But here they enjoy doing the drawing in Paint. He was also totally comfortable choosing songs from the winamp list. I think he knows a little bit of English and uses Pattern Matching to find a particular song.

When Sonu went away, K came back and started drawing. He knew his way around the zoom modes and I think he prefers the zoomed in mode because he has more control and is able to draw bolder lines. He was swiching back and forth between the zoom modes quite quickly and looked like he knew exactky what he was doing. K said he'd make a hut. I told him to think about making a whole village after that. Anyway, he started drawing the hut. Preferred to use the slanting brush in a large size because that way he got the slope of the roof in one go. All the kids who draw in Paint also have a lo of patience. They are willing to redraw each line innumerable times.

Pushpa, one of the girls who was standing there said "Jeet jaoongi to inam dena". I asked her what she was going to win in Paint? No response.

When K had finished making the hut, I opened my mouth for the first time on a comp learning skill. I suggested he make many copies of the hut to make a village. I could see he knew what I was talking about but didn't know how to do it. So I hinted at using the selection tool and then selecting 'copy' (I asked him if he should use 'cut' or 'copy' and he said the latter). And possibly because he had already tried something similar (I think he had, with text) he knew he had to do a paste after that. After that he was on his own – moving more and more copies around the screen, picking up whole clusters of huts and moving those around as well. he figured out how to just select two huts and copy-paste those. At one point he pressed copy when the selection was empty so no more pastes happened. I asked him to repeat what he had done earlier (should I have left it to him to figure it out – I think so).

The next idea was to make a boy and then make a whole crowd. He started with a circle and knew which shape would make exactly what.

An argument started about someone swearing at someone (Sunil called Pushpa a donkey or something). I tried to resolve it a little saying there's no point calling someone a donkey if they are not one. But should I intervene at all? And the very next minute it was about who's turn it was. Pushpa wanted me to tell K to go. I said it wasn't my computer so why should I make people take turns and that it was her job to get the machine to herself. Which she eventually did when K went away a few minutes later at 4 pm. He seems the bossy type. I don't think he shares what he learns the way the others do.

I went inside at 4 pm for a coffee/think break.

4:35 pm. On the desktop watcher, saw someone make a man with a coat with buttons and all. Whoever it was was obviously very comfortable with the touchpad because the cursor was zipping around all over the screen. Vivek and I went out to see who it was. We went out, saw the kids, told them it was a really good drawing. It was either Chandan or Sunil (now that they've both got their heads shaved, its difficult to tell). Pushpa said "*Ye to main pencil se bana loong*". So they're equating it with a pencil, and the drawing is not special just because it's on a comp. Vivek started to grill the little Sonu because he'd heard from one of the others that he was the one who'd broken the touchpad the day before. But he didn't push it after he (Sonu) said (very unconvincingly) that it was the older Sonu who'd held his hand and pushed it against the TouchPad.

I gave these kids the copy paste idea as well without telling them how to do it. Vivek thought that was enough of a hint so we went back inside and took to watching it on the DW. They didn't use copy paste initially – he was redrawing the entire temple he had made, with exactly the same colors. Someone drew a car next, with separate outline and fill colors. After a while, the mandir and man were copy pasted as well. Tried to undo some step again and again (but Paint has only one level). Save As was done 4 or 5 times (someone else's file was replaced).

Can also minimize from the taskbar (by right clicking) – this is something new users of windows are not very aware of normally. At 5:10 someone tried to change network settings for remote desktop. Tried to print a help topic when a printer alert window popped up. It was behind another window but he dragged it out and closed it – so he's probably seen this message lots of times before. Eventually he or she managed to restart the machine (because the computer said it would have to restart for the settings to take effect). Can we make system files inaccessible?

At 5:15 on my way out, I saw Guddu trying to insert random buttons and lists and other objects in FrontPage.

June 4, 1999

4:35 pm Sunil and two others were at the kiosk and were browsing the Disney channel. Since they had been talking about it, I asked him "*Itne dino se nahi dekha tha kya?*". They said the channel had not been working all these days...

At 6:15 pm when I was on my way out I looked in to see three kids playing games on the Disney website. The games were really colorful with lots of moving things to control and lively background music. The older Sonu (the one who works at the shop outside the gate) was playing one where Pluto had a dog bowl with a letter on it and had to catch those bones which had a word which began with the same letter. He was quite good at it in fact. I told them to find other games on the site and tell me about them by Monday.

Meera and I took really long to find the games and finally gave up. That particular screen just wouldn't come. Makes you wonder how 'good' we really are.

June 8, 1999

5:15 pm Sunil Chandan and Jeetender were playing a new game 'Goofy Gymnastics' on the Disney Site in which one Goofy has to bounce on the edge of a seesaw which throws the other Goofy up. Indirectly learning laws of physics because if a Ggoofy lands anywhere near the centre, the other one doesn't go up (have to be far from the fulcrum to make a good 1st order lever). Sunil is obviously the 'expert' at this game. These are good games. They involve skill and are not as mindless as motorcycle racing where all you do is move left or right. Sonu (the chai wala) came up to join them. He also plays the games but not as much as the others. 101 Dalmations Bounce and Goofy Gymnastics are the most popular games.

There was a seat made up of loose bricks put up next to the kiosk – it made life much easier for almost all the children who could now sit comfortably rather than stand all day (except Chandan – he's too short to sit on it).

I asked Sonu if new kids also come to the computer or only the regulars who've been coming from the start. He said there are new kids once in a while. In fact, one of the three Sanjays (one is the BA who has done a diploma in a computer course, the other is Sonu's brother, and the one being talked about is a kid in the 7th) once charged 10 bucks from a new kid for playing two games on the comp.

Over the weekend, Sunil found 7 or 8 games on the site. But in general, they all prefer playing the same game again and again (till they have mastered it?) rather than skipping from one to the next in the list on the Disney site.

At 6:15pm I noticed that the scratch pad had been totally scraped with a blade. The touch pad was working (which is why I hadn't really looked at it till then) but you could see the internal circuitry because the gray plastic had been scraped off. According to Sonu and Ranga (Kamlesh) the older kids had done it (ob!). they later said it was Sanju (the third Sanjay) who'd done it.

Rajkumar is one of the real 'gamers'. He 's good at finding them, loading them and figuring them out. He is also much in demand when a particular game has to be loaded but is otherwise ignored. He started a Tarzan game (Tarzan is the latest Disney feature animation so the site had a lot of related games, trailers, stories, activities and the like) in which the player had to join the dots – "*haath thak jaata hai karte karte*" – and if connected correctly it made a really good picture of a lion. RK seems to be one of the more sensible kids. When a bull came into the vacant lot – he was the only one not running in a panic and throwing stones at it – "*Use tang nahi karo to wo kuch nahi karega*". He clicks randomly on links in a page (says he doesn't know English but tries all the options anyway).

The kids know by now that a keyboard is needed for a lot of things (esp some of the games – a Darkwing Duck game where the duck has to avoid bolts of lightning by flying above or below them). RK siad "*Hame kyon nahi milta?*". One of the other very popular games is 101 Dalmations Bounce. They've figured out exactly what happens when – why the dog becomes smaller etc (have they played a lot of arcade video games before?).

Someone clicked on 'Draw' instead of 'Games' on the home page. The link led them to a bw picture meant to be coloured in but they didn't know how to save it. Sher Singh tried the Save As option and

created a whole lot of new folders in the process (so that's how that happens!). RK then 'drove' a story. He told Satish how to go through a story on the Disney site (i.e. which button to click, what to select, and even gave his interpretation of what was happening – the story was the Three Little Pigs but it was in Swedish!). He kept calling the 'Next' arrow 'Back' but he knew exactly what was happening. In fact, the wolf winking seemed to be a hot favourite because they kept replaying that scene again and again. The 2 mbps connectivity really helps because there's hardly any lag before the next frame loads. I asked him how often he played on the comp because it was obvious that he had explored these pages before. He said he usually comes after dinner for about half an hour when there is no one around. Or else after 9 in the morning (parents don't approve of their coming out before that).

I asked RK the same question about new users. There was someone called Mukesh "*jo dus din pehle aaya tha*" but he only sits at home. When he was asked "*computer khelega*", he would just shut the door saying he didn't know how.

June 14, 1999

At 9:30 am I took a look at what was happening from inside the kiosk. The Macromedia Shockrave site was open in Explorer (probably because the Disney site links to it extensively as all the games are based on the Macromedia technology). There was no cursor movement which I thought was strange. And there was a game on with very jhinchak music.

I went outside to see who was around and found a Touch-Pad smashed to smithereens instead. No wonder there was no one using the kiosk! Just then, Rajiv, a 9th class kid in the govt school opposite the road came to the kiosk with his friend Gautam (who used to be in the same school but had dropped out now). They had come there to play on the comp since the voltage at home was too low for cable TV to work. They saw the touch pad and said "*Chhote bacche tod dete hain*". I asked some of the other kids around what had happened but there was no reply. Two little kids near the chai wala said that it was Pankaj's brother Guddu who had ruined it yesterday "*Khundak mein aakar*". Tried to establish if it had been ok the day before (i.e. on Sunday) or if it had been broken after that. Someone said that it was fine on Saturday and was broken only on Sunday. Strangely enough, the last time that it was broken was also on a Sunday. Should we just leave it for a few days this time so that whoever is doing it sees that it is not going to be replaced instantly everytime. We could see how they react to not having the computer for a while, but would that help – because the ones who are breaking it will do so anyway).

So far nothing has happened to the monitor and its glass cover. But then, as doc says – you take it out on the interface, not on the actual device (we hit the steering wheel in the event of a car breakdown, not the engine!).

June 16, 1999

Sher Singh and Pradeep and one more kid asked Renu in the morning (and later me, when I walked by) "*Please laga do*". Renu told them she would only if they promised not to break it again.

June 17, 1999

8:45 am – Fixed Touch-Pad because of the Star TV crew coming in to shoot the Kiosk today. Sanjay (I think he's the class 7th kid who's a bit of a bully) said they'd take responsibility for the Touch-Pad and make sure it stayed ok but only during the day. He suggested that we lock up the kiosk at night after 8 or 8:30 and open it again the next morning after 9. I think we will.

Right after the Touch-Pad was installed, some Class 9 kids took over the comp to play games all the while swearing vociferously.

Rajender is back from his holiday. He asked me if we had put new games on the comp. I told him they were already there on the Disney channel. Because he's not been around in the days when all these Disney channel games were discovered, he thinks "*Sabko mujhse jyada aata hai*". He played a game and scored 24 on Goofy Gymnastics – someone said it was pretty good for a first try.. Sanjay very condescendingly added that "*Abhi use game samajh mein nahi aaya hai*". Someone told Rajender that he had slipped in the informal rankings to no. 6 because he didn't know about all these games. I think this bothers him a fair bit.

RK said he had found even more games before the comp got 'locked' (so that's why there was frustration and the comp was broken). They've stopped using the brick seat because its only for when it gets very hot and standing there becomes a problem.

The Star crew finally came – Monica was very impressed with the fact that they could play music of their choice. "*Aur kya karte ho*" she asked them – "*Acche acche game lagate hai*". When Siddhartha, one of the Star people, told them they'd be on TV, instead of getting all excited they said "*Hum to bahut baar aa chuke hain*". However, there was a bigger crowd by the Kiosk once the crew set up its equipment, inspite of this supposed indifference. Ankit said his father (who does *jote ka kaam*) also had a camera although not like their big one. While the crew was shooting they played a game on the Tarzan site where he has to bring all the monkeys down the nountain safely. Then they switched and everyone read Mouse House Jr together. Instinctively clicked on the house and all the objects inside it – so they've extended the knowledge that in windows when you click on something it opens or does something.

By this time the crew was busy 'engineering' its shots. In an effort to get them to fo it faster the cameraman said "*Khelna nahi aata kya?*". And then he asked them to change the game because this one was moving too slow. In fact Monica was also getting them to pretend as if they were fighting to get their turn.

At 11.00 they all had a mid morning snack – kharbooja – before this they were eating dussehri mangoes so these kids are not exactly poor and impoverished.

11.45 am. I came back after talking to Charit and found that they had launched a new game – where a UFO had to zap creatures and pull them up. Rajender said Keyboard *laga do*.

12.05 pm. One of the camera crew bullied the kids into letting him play "*Mujhe bhi khelne do,*" and then asked "*kya karna hota hai?*"

Someone tried to get a new game but clicked on 'Share it with a friend' instead. 'Game *lagana*' is considered quite a skill. Kept clicking 'back' again and again till he got to a menu and then he clicked 'What's hot this week' so he knew where he had to go.

12.30 pm. Rajender wrote his name in FrontPage and Sanjay and Satish changed each letter's color. The background music on was Jiya Jale and some new kid said "*Ye kya sada hua gaana laga rakha hai*". the comment for a Strings number was "*Ye to music laga diya*" because it was only instrumental – and so different from a *gaana*. Everyone seems to be very cool using a playlist to choose songs – add new ones etc. Someone added a whole lot by clicking open and selecting everything in sight. Guddu said "*Sabse lambi line laga de*" which actually turned out to be a vague path for a profiles directory. Sonu discovered that dragging Winamp left a trail so he kept doing it all the while singing "*la-lai lai lai la-lai la-lai lai*". After a while the trail automatically cleared up. Rajkumar said he wanted Disney and he got it through the Favourites menu.

June 21, 1999

8.20 am. I got to the kiosk with grand plans of keeping the cover locked while I installed some of the new stuff – esp the new portal and the virtual keyboard, and then monitoring the reactions of the kids, but that was not to be. The cover was off, the lock was broken, and the Touch-Pad had deep scratches which

rendered it useless. The kids outside all say that the cover is Ankit's (chhota Sonu) doing while the Touch-Pad damage is thanks to Chandan. I tried to get these two to say who had done it by saying "*thoda sa tumne kiya hoga... baki kisne kiya?*" but got only the standard "*bade bacchon ne*" answer.

So I went back inside and started to install the stuff I'd planned. All the while that I was doing that – the kids kept saying "*Bhaiyya – chaiyya chaiyya laga do, disney laga do*". That's when I decided to act tough and say there was no point in putting it on because they would promptly ruin it again anyway. To which Rajkumar said "*Theek hai – phir hum bat ball khel lenge*". But when I finally walked away they again said at least put it on.

While I was inside, I hadn't switched the outside monitor off so they could see what I was doing. When I was moving the songs – they asked me to put them on. There were also comments like "*Bhaiyya keyboard se khel rahe hain*". And after I installed the v keyboard, there was a slight 'oye' the first time that it popped up at the time of entering text. Older kids also came during this while and were thumping the Touch-Pad board and the glass cover and I might have bugged them because I told them to lay off quite sternly (even though it was polite).

Took a decision with Renu to board up the Kiosk for a few days and not replace the Touch-Pad immediately.