ABLE HANDS

Dean Thompson @deanthompson
Beyond Belief dancer Abdul shows why correct term is "differently-abled!"

US consul-general Dean Thompson's tweet after watching Abdul's performance (pictures left by Rashbehari Das). **Abdul, whose legs are paralysed, danced on his hands**

Bravehearts steal show

A STAFF REPORTER

■ *Twelve-year-old Jeet had lost his legs in an accident when he was two. Yet, he dreams of being a dancer.*

■ *Twentytwo-year-old Abdul's legs were paralysed after an illness when he was two months old. His father, a cook, earns Rs 2,500 per month. The eldest among six siblings, the second-year student is a national-level swimmer. He is struggling to continue his education because of financial problems.*

■ *Moumita is all of 12. Her father, a bus conductor, earns Rs 3000 a month. Moumita dreams of owning a harmonium.*

The three youngsters and about 60 more like them staged a musical show, Beyond Belief, at a packed GD Birla Sabhagar on Saturday evening.

Derek O'Brien and (right) Rupam Islam watch the show. (Rashbehari Das)

leased as no company is willing to abide by the condition set for its release: that it fund the children's education for at least five years, which would cost about Rs 7.5 lakh.

"We have been training the youngsters in arts and music and taking them to expeditions in the hills. This year they went to Sikkim," said Abhijit Das Gupta of Sukriti Foundation. The Lions Club International has also lent a helping hand.

"We have received 12 international awards but they don't mean much as we have failed to make people here aware," added Das Gupta.

Abdul was recently beaten up by a "dada" at Dhakuria railway station while returning home after rehearsal. His fault: trying to board a crowded compartment on wheelchair.

"This is a problem with the entire country. Today's performance was moving and I hope it is just the beginning of a beautiful journey for these children," said MP Derek O'Brien, who watched the programme along with US consul-general Dean Thompson.