

NEWSLETTER OF DECEMBER, 2011

Dear friends,

Another year is drawing to its close. It's been a year of quite a lot happening at Saksham; a lot of involvement from the community, a lot of love coming towards the kids in the school, a lot of optimism and hope for a better future for them and some tangible proof that it's happening.



We had mentioned the story of Sony Gupta, in our last Newsletter.



Sony, apart from taking up employment, has now enrolled herself as a student for a degree course in IGNOU. Another young girl, Sonali Saha, from the same neighborhood, who had been associated with Saksham, as a Teacher for the smaller children, is now a student in Lady Shriram College, one of the prestigious institutions in Delhi for B.A.(Hindi Literature). This is a solid example that with a little support from the community, many young lives can be given a new direction. Sonali's education had been sponsored by a generous soul and Saksham is also proud to have been associated with this young lady, Sonali.



Priyanka Dey, who also hails from a migrant family from West Bengal, was fortunate to have found a well-wisher and had completed her studies at the Army Public School, Noida. She had been involved with Saksham as a Teacher. Priyanka too has now finished school and is employed. She too is now pursuing her graduation at IGNOU. We wish her all the very best.

Another success story is that of Sonam Khasu, who hails from Nepal. Sonam had first come to Saksham to enroll her little son Basant. Then she decided to become a student herself and started learning from scratch, as she had never gone to school. Her childhood had been spent tending to the cattle and fetching water from a distance and doing the household chores while her parents worked in the fields. And then she got married and came to Delhi. Her husband, who works as a chef, was initially skeptical of her new interest, but as she went along undeterred, his support too came her way. Meanwhile she had another child and would come with the baby to study as well as to assist with the smaller children.



Last year, she enrolled herself in the Government school in the 8th standard and passed the exam. Now she is preparing for her tenth standard exams from the National Open School. We wish Sonam all success in her endeavors.

A really positive thing that has been happening in the past few months, are the visits of volunteers from IBM, who have been taking out time from their very busy schedules to take classes for the children at Saksham.



We salute their commitment and hope this will continue because the inputs are really helpful for the children. We are also grateful to the Organization "I Volunteer", through whom this tie-up happened.

A special thanks to Shri Ramesh Shamdasani , whose Foundation, the Saibaba Trust, has donated a handsome amount of Rs. 1 Lakh/ towards the running expenses of the school.



Shri Ramesh had also recently visited the school and expressed his appreciation. He has made certain suggestions towards making Saksham a self-sustaining effort and we are earnestly exploring all ways towards this goal. We will be really glad to receive your views/suggestions in this regard. Needless to say that the financial aspect of such a programme is a major determiner of its continuity. We are at present incurring an expenditure of Rs.35000-40000 towards the rent, payment of salaries, nutritional supplements and other incidental expenses. The student strength at present is over 500.

On Children's day this year, a group of students from Saksham participated in an event organized by the Great India Place, in Noida.



There was a Drawing Competition, a small cultural programme and free rides in the Amusement Park for all the kids.



The children enjoyed themselves thoroughly and we are grateful to the Organisers and specially Mrs. Rageshwari Tyagarajan, about whom we had spoken of earlier, for this opportunity. Mrs. Thiagarajan has also been actively involving the students from many schools in Noida to visit and interact with the kids.



Very recently, the children of Army Public School, Noida visited the children with gifts and loads of affection.

The Rotary Club, Noida has also been supporting Saksham.



They had a water cooler installed in the school premises and also distributed new clothes for all the children on more than one occasion. On the occasion of Christmas, they distributed sweaters to most of the children in the school.



The Members of the Vincent De Paul Society, also visited the school for Christmas with slices of delicious freshly baked cakes for all the children. We are thankful for their constant involvement.

The Lioness Club, Noida held an Eye-Check up camp for around 150 children. They have also contributed towards the expenses of the weekly medical check-up that is being regularly held in the school.

The nutritional supplement of bananas, once a week, is continuing to be sponsored by the Rotary Club, Delhi(South).



Sattu drink by one of our supporters is also continuing.



Several senior officials from The State Bank of Travancore had visited Saksham and were very happy with the school. They have promised to pitch in and help. Kairali TV had recorded and telecast their visit.



They have promised to pitch in and help. Kairali TV had recorded and telecast their visit.



The kids gave a sprucing up to the school around Diwali. It was a day of fun too.

We are coaching 14 children for the Entrance exam for admission to the Navodaya Vidhyalaya. As you may recall, six of our children are already studying there. They are back at their homes for the winter vacation and keeps visiting Saksham daily to help around with the little ones. It is a pleasure to see how poised and confident they have become. The exams had been postponed last year indefinitely and unfortunately, the kids who had prepared for the same could not receive their hall tickets due to some administrative error and could not therefore appear for the exam when it was finally held in July. The exam for the next academic year is slotted to be held in February.

Thanks to all the wonderful patrons of Saksham who have been generously donating to this cause. We hope you will continue to extend a helping hand. We assure you again that all contributions are utilized only for the running of the school and for the benefit of the children. Details of donations and expenditure for the current financial year will appear on our website <http://www.sakshamkids.org/> in due course.

Please also keep visiting our page on Facebook as we have been uploading photographs of all the events as well as the drawings etc of the children of Saksham Vidhyalaya. Do encourage the children and be part of our project by giving us your comments/suggestions.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Saksham-Kids/162722063756271>

We need your support. While we will welcome any sort of help gratefully, we really do need your financial help as well. Remember , we have visualized this as a community project and we would want every willing individual to be involved. Please do visit the school and see for yourselves how far we have taken this forward. It is a genuine cause and free from any vested interests. Pitch in folks and help in making more children "Saksham."

Thanks again for all your support.

Nadira Razak,
General Secretary,
Saksham