

NEWSLETTER OF SEPTEMBER, 2010

Dear Saksham Friends,

Contrary to past occasions when one began to tell you of all the positive happenings in recent times at Saksham, this time it is with a heavy heart that I am beginning this task. The sad demise of *Shri Krishnan Dubey, who was the Founder of Saksham* and who was its President from its inception, has left us all with a sense of deep loss.



Dubeyji, as all of us fondly addressed him was the one who guided and inspired us with his warmth, his objective thinking which was always laced with ample compassion, his fair approach to all matters and most of all his youthful spirit and joie-de-vivre. It was to him the rest of us turned to, whenever we were in need of guidance. He was like a fond parent, a philosopher friend, a confidante, a sounding board and so many things more to all of us irrespective of our age profiles and he played each of these roles as the circumstances demanded it ,with a sense

and sensibility that was unique to him. All of us at Saksham will always miss him and be constantly aware of his absence.



But then his spirit will always guide us and it is with that hope that we will take our work forward.

All the activities that had been mentioned in the last newsletter is continuing with renewed vigor. The strength of the school that is being run in Nithari, has had to be limited at around 450, the major limitation being that of space and funds.



We have been however been lucky that we have been able to take on three more rooms on rent in the near vicinity of the present school , which has greatly reduced the overcrowding and the hustle and bustle . This has been made possible by the generous commitment of *Shri P.V. Shamsuddin*, a friend of Saksham.

Another piece of good news is that out of the fourteen children who were coached this year for the entrance exam for admission to the Jawahar Navodaya Vidhyalaya, two children, Nitish and Kavita, were selected and have since been admitted to the school at Dhoom Manikpur. This brings the total of such children admitted there to six. We hope that this will continue to be an annual feature. :-) We had also coached a few children for lateral admission to the Ninth standard in the Navodaya Vidhyalaya. Although none of them could make it this time, we will be persisting with our efforts for the next academic year as well.

We continue to receive support from all our erstwhile well wishers without whose involvement this project would have been wound up long ago. We respect their commitment



Smt. Lata Jain (extreme right) with her friends

Our grateful thanks is also due to *Smt. Lata Jain*, who has become actively involved in introducing our work to a wide circle of people in the community and who are now pitching in with help in cash and kind.

The weekly medical check-ups are continuing, thanks to *Shri P.C.Jain* , *Shri B.K. Jain* and *Dr. Poddar*. So too are the tailoring classes that were started more than a year ago.



The second batch of girls are stitching their way to mastery over the sewing machine. It is a matter of pleasure to note that the older girls who have completed their course now wear clothes stitched by themselves and are also taking on occasional work from their neighbours.

The older children are fairly friendly with the basic office software and the younger ones are slowly being introduced to the computer. *Sumeet Jain* and *Anuj Jain* have been volunteering once a week to help the kids in this respect. Thanks also to *Saurabh Jain* who has also been coming to Saksham as a volunteer.



A recent highlight in the calendar of events of Saksham was the occasion provided by the theatre group, "Pandies" and the American Centre authorities to a group of thirty two children of Saksham to stage two plays at the centre. The event was a huge success and the kids performed to a very appreciative audience. Our heartfelt thanks to Shri Sanjay Kumar and his group , whose association with the kids has been growing to a very warm relationship.



Thanks to **Ms. Priya Modi of the NGO "I Volunteer"** who arranged for a day long interactive and fun filled day between the Personnel of Johnson and Johnson and a large group of Saksham.



Thanks too to *Ms. Karishma Handa* of the World Wildlife Fund who arranged for the screening of two documentaries for the children on the same day at the World Wildlife Centre.

As is customary, we have been celebrating all the major festivals. The Holi programme this year was very enjoyable. Our thanks to *Ms. Madhu Jain* who helped choreograph a popular dance item with the senior girls and who also got the involvement of her social group to pitch in with fans and steel almirahs for the school



Ms. Madhu Jain seen seated in this picture

Thanks to *Shri Mohammed Ishrat Khan, DIG/BSF*, who arranged for the distribution of snacks for all the children on Holi.



This year, on Independence Day, instead of the usual cultural programme by the children, the older children of Saksham undertook the cleaning of the lanes surrounding the school in Nithari. We are hoping to make this a more frequent exercise as the children really loved the spirit of it all.

Support has also been extended to Saksham in the recent past by the members of the Rotary Club (South Delhi). Apart from financial assistance, one of the members has also pitched in with T-shirts for all the children in the school. They are also looking into more areas of involvement with Saksham which is a welcome step towards greater benefit for the children.



Special thanks in this regard to *Ms. Deepali of Birla Vidya Niketan*, who besides getting the teachers and children of her school involved with Saksham, also introduced our work to the Rotarians, with whom their school has been associated with.

Thanks too to the *Management of Amrita Vidhyalaya, Pushp Vihar*, who has been allowing us to collect textbooks for the primary classes, which can be used to the benefit of the children in Saksham. This year in particular, we could get quite a large number of general knowledge books, which the older children are making full use of to increase their knowledge. Special thanks to *Mrs. Unni* who had taken the initiative to forge this link as also to *Neelima*, Librarian at the school, who has been so kind to spend time in sorting out the books and bundling them etc.

Shri Haridas has, over the past year, been helping Saksham with a steady supply of notebooks and has also involved himself in other ways. We are grateful to him.

Shri Ashit Saxena continues to sponsor the Sattu drink, which is given to the children thrice a week. A big thanks to him.

Dr. M. Venugopal, Medical Superintendent of Swami Dayanand Hospital, Shahdara, continue to help us by facilitating all required medical assistance to the children of Saksham who are in need of more detailed check-ups. Thanks Doc.

As we keep telling all of those who get associated with Saksham, every little bit helps and it is a nice feeling when we know that this is a concerted effort on the part of the community to help and share. For those closely involved with Saksham, the whole journey has been an enriching experience in many ways. Most of all , the growing community of Saksham well-wishers is a sure proof that despite all the depressing news of violence and corruption etc, that we hear and read of everyday, there is ample goodness that is making the world go round.

If any aspect or anyone has not been mentioned here, please consider it as mere inadvertence. There is no intention to either exaggerate or belittle anybody's role in this project.



To conclude on a happy note, we wish to inform everyone that *Shri P.C.Jain* has kindly agreed to take over the role of President of the Saksham Trust.



Shri B.K Jain, who has been involved with Saksham for some time now has also agreed to become one of the trustees. The official formalities in the above regard is in the process of being completed.

The statement of contributions received and expenditure incurred during the past financial year is attached.

We hope to receive your continued support. We thank you all once again.

Nadira Razak

General secretary, Saksham