

THE BIRDS HAVE FLEDGED— ALL SET TO FLY!

Matrubhoomi Parichay Shibir

The heart & soul of Modern Bharat lies in its villages even in the wake of rapid urbanization. However, urban youths, particularly destitute children, often lack the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the culture and lifestyle of rural Bharat. 'Matrubhoomi Parichay Shibir' was launched to bridge this gap.

This year, the camp was organized at Rohini Agrotourism Centre (RAC) during 17th-19th December for 34 girls (6-12 years of age) of The Bombay Vigilance Society's Balikashram, Dadar. In addition to centre staff, 08 volunteers were present all throughout.

As the girls were going out for the first time since the pandemic, our schedule included ample time for fun and leisure— be it playing in the courtyard of the traditional Konkani home or enjoying swinging from the tree-branches on make-shift swings. The scrumptious meals cooked on a traditional 'choolah' added great flavour to the whole experience. This trip brought the girls closer to nature & widened their knowledge-base.



Name of session	Session conductor	Details
Site Tour	Shri. Kiran Lele	Information about organic farming & biodiversity at RAC was shared.
Natural Treasure-Hunt		Girls were instructed to collect leaf & flower samples to make a collage.
Bharatiya Khel	Smt. Harshali Mukane	Traditional prop-less games were introduced.
Kirtan	Shri. Vijayanand Shastri	The story of Rani of Jhansi was narrated in Varkari-styled Kirtan.
Exercise & Soorya-Namaskar	Shri. Pranav Bhonde	Correct procedures of Sooryanamaskar & other light exercises were taught.
Gopaalan	Shri. Kiran Lele	Indigenous cow-rearing was demonstrated at RAC. The girls milked the cows and played with calves. Visiting the cow-shed of Shri. Kiran Shinde, girls learned about cow-protection and large-scale dairy-farming.
Farming		Different types of farming were introduced and girls planted seeds at RAC. Farm experiments were demonstrated at Shri. Shivam Mehta's experimental farm.
River Visit		The girls were taken on a trip to a nearby dam to bathe in river waters.
Vegetable Carving	Smt. Kshama Patre	The art of vegetable carving for plate decoration was taught.
Hot-water Spring Visit	Shri. Kiran Lele	The girls had a bath at the hot-water spring at Sativali & visited the Navanath Temple.

A Story to tell!

While leaving for the hot-water springs, one girl came running with a bunch of flowers. Giving us one each, she asked us to breathe in through it like a straw. Soon our throats cleared & breaths became fresher. She explained that this was a wild plant introduced during a session & that it had decongestant & deobstruent properties. We were all pleasantly surprised to see that the information was already being put to good use!

Weekly Activities

Replete with stories, songs, games, and educational themes, our fun-filled weekly sessions are our gateway to the children's hearts; helping us adapt to their needs.

From July '21 to January '22, we tested our Maths, Geography & Science modules. The implementation of each module was preceded by a training session & followed by a review meeting. It was noted that the children's learning was severely compromised by their weak grasp of linguistic fundamentals. Thus, 'Linguistic Development' was taken up under 'Fun & Learn'.

First, Marathi was chosen and fundamental areas for work were identified. Next, interactive multimedia content was developed for each topic. For the first time, a module was developed wholly by field volunteers. Consequently, this module is more vibrant, concise, and customized to meet our beloved children's needs. An offline training programme has also markedly improved the delivery & problem solving. Between July '21 and March '22, we covered the following topics:



Subject	Topics covered	Particulars
Mathematics	Elementary Operations	Introduction to elementary arithmetic operations, viz., addition, subtraction, multiplication, & division.
	Time Keeping	Introduction to the division of time in seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months & years; and reading analog clock dials to tell time.
	Measuring Length	Introduction to units of length & measurement of distances using scales & rulers.
Geography	Earth and other planets	Introduction to the workings of solar system.
	All about Earth	Introduction to the Earth's composition, & its orbit, axial tilt, etc.
	How mountains form	An overview of mountain formation with emphasis on plate tectonics
	Formation of Water Bodies	Self-explanatory
	Longitudes	Introduction to longitudes & time-zones
Science	Environment	Introduction to living & non-living things in the environment, concepts of deforestation, pollution, etc.
	Air & Water	Role of air & water in our lives, their pollution and its prevention/mitigation.
	Food	Variety in need & types of food items, and do's & don'ts of food intake.
	The Living World	Introduction to ecosystems, food cycles, etc.
	Our Body & Internal Organs	Introduction to the human body, its composition, its internal organs, and bodily processes with special reference to the topics covered earlier.
Linguistic Development (through Marathi with extensive use of interactive presentations & multimedia content developed by our volunteers)	Animals: sounds, homes, & young ones.	Marathi words for sounds, homes & young ones of domestic, urban, and wild animals
	Expressing emotions	Self-explanatory
	Occupations	Occupations & their types were introduced along with explanation of qualifications to pursue them.
	So fab vocab!	Introduction to food-related words of daily use in 6 Bharatiya languages (excluding Marathi)
	ABC's of cooking!	<p>Marathi words for: Ingredients such as spices, legumes & pulses, and cooking actions such as dicing, chopping, frying, etc., and the specialized utensils & accessories used for the same were taught.</p> <p>Lastly, the origins of the pan-Bharat delicacy 'poha', its ingredients, and various types of preparing it (with onions, with curd, etc.) were introduced.</p>

Project Saksham

Presently, 02 beneficiaries of Project Saksham reside at our Group Home in Sahakar Nagar, Wadala. Both the beneficiaries have been trained in cooking & housekeeping and have become virtually self-reliant in those subjects. Both the beneficiaries also volunteer their time to organize weekly activities under the 'Swarajya@75' series started by us under the Library at Doorstep initiative. These developments have helped them socialize. The following is a brief overview of the project.

Karan Pandey

- Karan arrived in August 2021 after completing SSC with aggregate 64.20%. Currently, he is a student of FYJC (Commerce) at Ambedkar College, Wadala. He has also been enrolled in tuitions for the same.
- He has been given training in computer essentials & MS Office.
- He is currently being trained in magic through Jadoo Vikas Kendra, Dadar.












Shivkumar Gauda

- The first beneficiary of Project Saksham to come reside at the group home (in November 2020), Shivkumar completed his HSC here with an aggregate of 77.19% and is currently pursuing FYBA from Kirti College, Dadar.
- After elementary training in computer essentials, he has been enrolled in a typing class for improving proficiency.
- Primary training has been given to him in driving both 2 & 4-wheeler motor vehicles.
- His regular practice of athletics has been resumed.

Project Vikas

The seeds of Project Vikas have already begun to sprout and our children are making us proud with their marvellous achievements in such a short span!

<p>Warli Art workshop by Saily's Art Zone organized at JSF Thane.</p>		<p>One student passed White belt exam with A+ grade, 2 with A grade and 12 with B+.</p>		<p>7 Karate students participated in MKSAT's 26th India Karate Championship and bagged 1 Trophy, 2 Gold, 6 Silver and 3 Bronze medals.</p>
<p>November 2021</p>	<p>December 2021</p>	<p>January 2022</p>	<p>February 2022</p>	<p>March 2022</p>
	<p>Basic Yoga Camp organized for students of Karate to improve their physical & mental well-being.</p>		<p>1. Anand Mela was organized. 2. All Karate students participated in Vinayak's Martial Arts & Fitness' inter-class contest winning 6 Gold, 4 silver, and 5 Bronze medals.</p>	
				

Anand Mela:

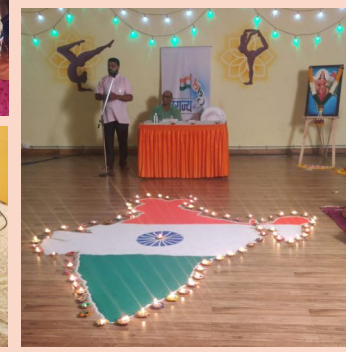
Project Vikas' annual gathering 'Anand Mela' was organized on 12th February 2022. It was truly a gathering of talents. While the students of chess had their growth tested by state-level chess players, the students of fine arts entered in a friendly 'Memory Drawing' contest to test their skills. An exhibition of their finest artworks was organized. The students of Kathak & Karate also delivered their respective performances before the felicitation programme. The Kathak girls were felicitated by handing 'ghunghroos' at the hands of their instructors. Similarly, the remaining students too were felicitated at the hands of their instructors.

Library at Doorstep

'Library at Doorstep' now has a membership of over 175 strong with around 25% active readership; the latter having increased significantly during January-March 2022 just as member house-visits were streamlined. We also hope to launch a web-based application soon.

'Swarajya@75', started to commemorate Bharat's 75th year of Independence, has helped to increase readership. It has had 34 programmes so far such as lectures, documentary screenings, presentations, etc., on topics including biographies of national icons, Bharat's freedom struggle & post-independence contributions in various fields.

To celebrate Diwali, a diya-painting & lantern-making workshop was organized for the members. In a special programme on 31st October 2021, a tricolour Rangoli of Bharat was drawn, stories of less-known martyrs were narrated, & the diyas prepared by the children were lit around the Rangoli in honour of all Bharatiya martyrs.



Celebrate With Us



On 10th October 2021 Smt. Vinaya Pendse, Smt. Sumedha Barve, & Smt. Shobha Dibikar visited JSF Thane and conducted a traditional Maharashtrian 'Bhondla' for the girls. A Bhondla is a traditional festival full of games, songs, & stories meant to increase socialization of young girls. Our Sahayogis celebrated this festival with the girls with the intent of introducing Bharatiya culture to the girls through a fun festival.

On 8th March 2022, the first birthday of Chi. Advik (s/o Smt. Aditi and Shri. Chaitanya Joshi) was celebrated at JSF Titwala in an auspicious & exhilarant environment. The children at the centre celebrated his birthday in a traditional way (performed aukshan) and gave him their best wishes singing a Sanskrit song to wish him a long & healthy life.

Project Adhyayan

Project Adhyayan was started in August 2021 to resume schooling of the children living at JSF Thane & JSF Titwala. Emphasis was given to completing the syllabus of the second semester during the period October '21 to March '22. Additionally, special attention was given to developing the children's fundamental skills of reading & writing. Lastly, keeping in view the upcoming year, existing modules based on the concepts of science, maths, & geography were refined & some new ones were prepared where absent.

A few words of gratitude

Ankur Pratishthan's work continued unhindered even during this tumultuous year, the credit of which goes to each one of our partner CCIs, altruistic Sahayogis, volunteers, expert trainers, teachers & all others who contributed directly & indirectly to our work. We are indebted to them all for their invaluable contributions & look forward to many more years of association.

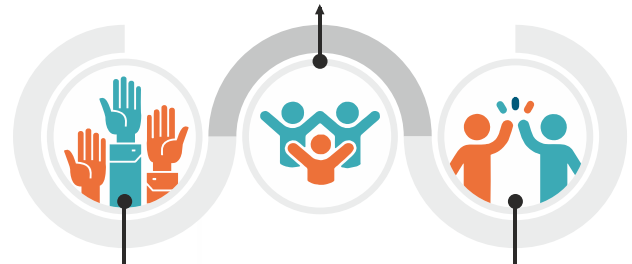
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