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ANKUR PRATISHTHAN

Newsletter
April-September 2021

LET'S BUILD A YOUTH, LET'S BUILD A NATION!

Veermata Anuradha Gore addressing the Children

Entering into the 75th Year of Independence is a major landmark in Bharat's history. Celebrations have been afoot all over the nation even among these challenging times. We are all proud of it, but how many of us could give satisfactory answers to questions such as: What does independence really signify? Why does it matter? At what cost did we attain it? What did we sacrifice to maintain it for this long? What are the challenges we have to collectively face in order to uphold it now & in the future? It can be stated with relative certainty that not many adults could answer such questions, let alone children. In fact, many of us may not even have bothered to ponder upon such seemingly basic yet fundamental questions.

Swarajya@75 is our effort to pose such questions before children and provide them with the necessary resources & guidance, to explore & find their own answers. Through this series comprising of a diverse range of programmes such as lectures, interactive activities, documentary & movie screenings, competitions, etc., we not only wish to inculcate inquisitiveness & a sense of national pride among children, but by implementing it through our 'Library at Doorstep' initiative, we also wish to cultivate healthy reading habits among them. Thus this series serves a triple purpose: first, it educates children about the significance of liberty and the effort needed to uphold it thereby helping them better appreciate this gift; second, it encourages children to ask questions they have taken for granted previously & make an earnest effort to find their own answers thus boosting their inquisitiveness as well as acute thinking; and last but not the least, it promotes the habit of reading for both enrichment & entertainment.

> "Attaining independence is not the end of struggles, but just the start of a longer struggle to maintain it. We see in Afghanistan today what happens when a nation fails to uphold its integrity & sovereignty. Therefore, celebrating Bharat's 75th Independence Day is particularly significant. History is witness to many nations around and beyond the Bharatiya subcontinent which attained freedom almost contemporaneously with Bharat, but are either failing to maintain independence or have already crumbled. Bharat has been able to traverse the path of Swarajya to Surajya due to its strict & unflinching adherence to democratic principles, as well as the uncompromising attitude in exerting sovereignty. In light of recent events, Bharat's success in treading the path of progress is exhilarating. This success is owed to, in a large part, the strength of Bharat's Security Forces, as also to every other component of the Bharatiya social fabric."
>
> **—Veermata Anuradha Gore—**

The first session of Ankur Pratishthan's series 'Swarajya@75' (under its Signature initiative 'Library at Doorstep') was conducted on 15th August 2021 by Veermata Anuradha Gore. Hon'ble Corporator of BMC Shri. Ameya Ghole chaired this programme. 27 children living in the vicinity of Ankur Pratishthan's library in Sahakar Nagar were present for the programme.

Library Members making full use of our diverse collection of books

Thanks to the efforts of Hon'ble Corporator of BMC Shri. Ameya Ghole, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation has permitted Ankur Pratishthan to utilize a space of around 740 sq. ft. in the Sahakar Nagar Welfare Centre for its signature initiative 'Library at Doorstep'. This has greatly helped our efforts & Ankur Pratishthan is deeply grateful to Hon'ble Shri. Ameya Ghole as well as all residents of Sahakar Nagar for their unending support & encouragement to all our initiatives. Thanks also to our generous donors, the library now houses over 1800 books in English & Marathi and the inventory continues to grow. The membership of 'Library at Doorstep' has now grown to over a hundred and fifty strong, and hundreds of books have already been read as of the writing of this report!

Weekend Club Activities

To commemorate Bharat's 75th Independence Day, Ankur Pratishthan has started 'Swarajya@75'— a series of 75 unique programmes to be conducted between 15 Aug. 2021 and 15 Aug. 2022, centred around the glory of our beloved motherland under Ankur's Signature Initiative 'Library at Doorstep'. On weekends each week, an activity of around 2 hours is conducted under this series. In these programmes, information about the significant events from Bharat's freedom struggle against the British, as well as about the developments made by Bharat in various sectors in the last 75 years is presented before the children through interactive media such as presentations, documentaries, etc.

Sr. No.	Activity	Date
1.	Swarajya@75 Inaugural Address by Smt. Anuradha Gore	15 August 2021
2.	Presentation on 'War for Independence of 1857'	21 August 2021
3.	Presentation on 'The Struggle for Liberation of Hyderabad'	25 September 2021
4.	Screening of the movie 'The Legend of Bhagat Singh'	26 September 2021

Story Narration Contest

One of the fundamental skills to be inculcated for all-round growth of personality is that of eloquent narration. Therefore, we organized a story narration competition to help develop this essential skill set among the children. The theme given was stories of 'revolutionary freedom fighters'.

However, this was no ordinary competition. In order to properly nurture the skill of narration, we also helped the children preparation. First, they were given access to the relevant books in our library to select a suitable story. Second, they were groomed & guided on how to effectively narrate a story. Only then, as the final stage of the process, was the competition conducted.

16 children participated in the contest who were divided into Junior (Standards 1st to 4th) and Senior (Standards 5th to 8th).groups. In the junior group Aditri Tonape & Aadnya Mhatre were awarded the 1st & 2nd places respectively while in the senior group, Ojasvi Yadav was awarded the 1st rank and Ayush Sakpal, the second.

Glimpses of Story Narration Contest

Special Activities

Full-2-Dhamaal!

'Chintam Pintam Dhamaal' was a unique daily digital workshop for the emotional & moral growth of children between 3 to 7 and 8 to 12 years of age, organized by Manashakti Kendra, Lonavala in the month of May. At the request of Ankur Pratishthan, they conducted it free-of-cost for children living in CCIs. A total of 127 children from 3 centres (Family Home, Balikashram & Shraddhanand Mahilashram) participated in this workshop. We express our gratitude to Manashakti Kendra for their generosity & for conducting such a fantastic workshop.

Adding some Magic!

To add some spice to the lives of our beloved children, we arranged for some special entertaining performances. We arranged a digital 'Magic & Puppet Show' at Shraddhanand Mahilashram by father-son magician duo Sunil & Samrudh Kamat from Jadoo Vikas Kendra, Dadar. All 30 girls of Shraddhanand were present for this show. A Virtual Magic Show by Magician Suyash Marathe was organized at JSF Titwala for which all 20 boys were present. Both shows received positive responses from their respective audiences.

Actions speak louder than words!

One of the problems observed among children living at CCIs is their inability to express themselves or communicate their feelings effectively. Several performing artforms such as miming have been shown to greatly help in the development of non-verbal communication skills as also in improving cognitive & emotional intelligence. Therefore, Ankur Pratishthan in association with Mime Art & Culture organized a week-long digital mime workshop at Shraddhanand Mahilashram. The workshop was personally conducted by Internationally renowned veteran Mime Shri. Kunal Motling. 14 girls from the centre participated in the workshop and each one of them enjoyed it greatly!

Soaring in the skies… Well the next best thing!

Is it not wondrous to think that about a century ago, one had to spend several months or years on ships to get to distant lands, yet today we can hop on a flight and get there in a matter of hours! Such a leap in human advancement is at its roots, governed by the fundamental principles of aerodynamics; almost completely the same as the ones we wittingly or unwittingly put to use as kids while crafting paper planes for fun or to play mischief! How exciting would it be to learn about it all through a hands-on workshop?! With this in mind, Ankur Pratishthan in association with Nehru Science Centre (NSC) organized an Aeromodelling workshop for the children of Family Home & Balikashram on 4th of June, 2021. The workshop covered basic principles of aerodynamics which were explored through 6 paper plane models, viz., Tailed Plane, Harrier, Dart, Bulldog Dart, Stealth, and Ring Aeroplane. We extend special thanks to the generosity of NSC for conducting this workshop at a highly discounted rate in consideration of the nature of our work. We look forward to a lasting partnership with NSC for many such activities & events in future!

Aeromodelling workshop conducted by Nehru Science Centre

Rakshabandhan

Ankur Pratishthan looks upon the festival of Rakshabandhan as an occasion to celebrate not just the bond between siblings, but also our bonds with the various other things that bring meaning to life. This year, we celebrate the 75th year of Bharat's independence, a landmark never to be forgotten. What better time than for one to cherish and strengthen our bond with our nation? Thinking thus, we selected the theme 'Bond with Nation' for Rakshabandhan this year. As our nation is so vast and rich in historical and cultural heritage, the teams of every centre decided to choose their own sub-theme to highlight before the children and kindle love for the nation in the hearts of our beloved children. Thus, the team working at Family Home, Dadar chose to highlight our nation's rich history, particularly of Maharashtra, and organized a special virtual tour of the forts of Maharashtra by Prof. Ameya Jadhav (who has an encyclopaedic knowledge of Indian history and has visited more than 175 forts of Maharashtra); while the team working at Shraddhanand Mahilashram brought forth India's rich culture through their interactive presentation on various Indian attires. Stree-shakti was the sub-theme at Balikashram, Dadar where the success stories of several Indian women from various fields were narrated in the form of a dialogue. The team at Children Aid Society's Bal Kalyan Nagari conducted a power-packed offline session with the sub-theme 'Introduction of States'. At the Jeevan Samvardhan Foundation centres at Thane & Titwala, the sub-theme selected was 'Tourist locations of India'— a little infotainment!

November 2020

- Experimental launch of online Workshops at 3 centres

June-July 2021

- Online selection workshops in fine & performing arts conducted at Balikashram, Dadar.

August 2021

- Regular online training under Project Vikas started at Balikashram, Family Home & JSF Thane centres
- 2 Teachers appointed under Project Adhyayan

September 2021

- Offline Selection Programme conducted at JSF Titwala under Project Vikas
- Training programme of Teachers conducted under Project Adhyayan

Project Vikas

Starting in November 2020, we brought about a tectonic shift in the modus operandi of Project Vikas by transitioning it into the virtual space. Our experimental launch of digital workshops under this initiative received a sensational response from both our beloved children & the centres. Our goal was initially to do away with the children's boredom & channelize their energies for the better, but the overwhelming response to the workshops ensured us that there was promise even in digital training!

Ganapati Idol painting under Project Vikas

Karate training under Project Vikas

Special Workshops

In order to promote out-of-the-box thinking & provide exposure to various art styles, Ankur Pratishthan in association with Saili's Art Zone conducted the following special workshops digitally at Balikashram, Dadar.

1. Warli Art
2. Caricature
3. Mandala Art
4. Doodling

Number of Beneficiary Students Under Project Vikas (FY 2021-22)	Sports		Fine Arts	Performing Arts		Total
	Chess	Karate	Elementary Drawing & Craft	Kathak	Singing & Instruments	
Family Home (Dadar)	4	–	4	--	--	08
Balikashram (Dadar)	--	–	6	8	--	14
JSF (Thane)	--	–	4	9	--	13
JSF (Titwala)	--	10	7	--	07	24
Total	04	10	21	17	07	59

'Adhyayan' in Process

Project Adhyayan

The academic growth of children in CCIs is hampered by a number of causes; most notably due to lack of dedicated educators. This problem was particularly worsened by the lockdown & sudden shift to digital space. In light of this, two of our partner CCIs, viz., the homes run by Jeevan Samvardhan Foundation at Thane & Titwala, reached out to us expressing concern that this could cause a major disruption in the children's education. Paying heed to our partners' call, we immediately launched Project Adhyayan by appointing 1 dedicated teacher at each centre in the month of August 2021. In the first month of their work, the teachers worked closely with the students, gauged their individual & collective levels of understanding of concepts, accordingly set baselines, & devised an action plan. We further trained both teachers in the month of September to help them better understand & provide for the educational needs of our beloved children. This project is being implemented offline from the start.

Number of Students (FY 2021-22)	1st to 4th Standard	5th to 7th Standard	8th to 10th Standard	Total
JSF Thane	07	07	04	18
JSF Titwala	20	15	11	46
Total	27	22	15	64

Project Anubhooti

Ankur Pratishthan in collaboration with Abhyuday— IIT Bombay, organized the third edition of its signature social internship programme 'Project Anubhooti' in the month of July 2021. A total of 6 applicants from IIT Bombay were selected as interns through screening, interview, and suitable assignments. Eminent educationists Smt. Shobhana Bhide and Shri. Parag Jahagirdar acted as the mentors for this programme. After their orientation, the interns began working on designing & developing concept-oriented subject teaching modules & worksheets for mathematics & science for the children studying in grades 1 through 7 under the SSC board curriculum. The modules designed by the interns include a diverse range of activities and games to help make the learning of maths & science fun for children. Dr. Vijay Honkalaskar, who is a free-lance researcher & author in the field of Rural Development, graced the concluding ceremony of this programme as the key-note speaker.

Project Saksham

Shivkumar Gauda, resident beneficiary of Project Saksham since November 2020, has completed his HSC exam with an aggregate of 77.19%, and has been enrolled in the BA course at Kirti College, Dadar. He continues his training as an athlete alongside being trained in computer essentials, household chores, etc.

To add to the good news, Karan Pandey, former resident of Anand Kendra (Worli) & former beneficiary of Project Vikas, who has completed SSC with an aggregate of 64.20%, has now been admitted to our group home. He is being enrolled for FYJC (Commerce) at Ambedkar College, Wadala. He will also be provided basic computer & other essential training. His training in athletics will also be suitably resumed.

Celebrate With Us

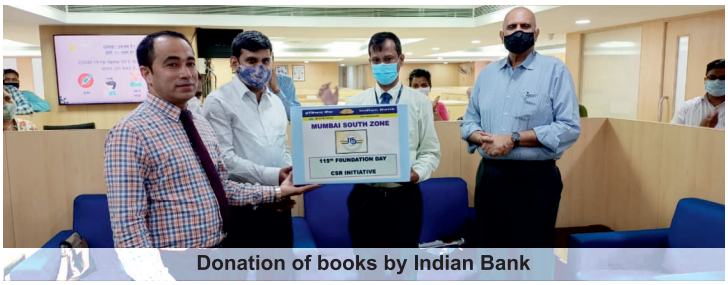
To care for the welfare of the destitute is a duty of every citizen. In the lives of most of us however, opportunities to carry out this duty hardly ever present themselves or are stretched far & few between. Through 'Celebrate with Us', Ankur Pratishthan has opened an opportunity for every socially responsible citizen to contribute to a noble cause in spite of the hectic schedule of quotidian life. Donors under this initiative get a deeper understanding of the ground realities & the necessity of our work by interacting with the children living at CCIs & dedicated centre staff, as well as our volunteers.

Indian Bank, on account of their 115th Foundation Day contributed to various social causes. Under 'Celebrate with Us' Ankur Pratishthan connected them to Jeevan Samvardhan Foundation. Shri. Naresh Chandra Nehra (Dy. Zonal Manager for Mumbai South Zone, Indian Bank) along with other zonal staff & branch managers from Thane visited the centre in the afternoon of 5th August 2021 and interacted with the children personally. They donated some essential home appliances to the centre & organized an entertaining magic show by magician Raja Navishekh, who like many other folk artists, had been adversely affected by the pandemic. The children greatly enjoyed the afternoon. We express our heartfelt thanks to Indian Bank for their generous support to our work and our partner CCI.

After study-kit donation programme

Shri. Ananda Khadsare connected with us as a donor under 'Celebrate with Us' and sponsored individual study kits comprising of workbooks, slates, charts, & other study materials for all beneficiaries of Project Adhyayan. He visited JSF Thane on 25th September 2021 and interacted with the children, encouraging them to study with dedication & concentration. Ankur Pratishthan will forever be grateful to him for his kind support to our initiative.

Ankur Pratishthan received a donation of 103 different titles of Amar Chitra Katha Comics belonging to 7 different collections worth ₹15,800/- from Indian Bank under their CSR initiative to commemorate their 115th Foundation Day on 14th August this year. Our ex-volunteer Shri. Tejas Chavan who is an Assistant Manager at the Mumbai South Zonal Office of Indian Bank, played the lead role in getting this donation for us.



Donation of books by Indian Bank

In addition to this, Shri. Saurabh Khare, Smt. Vinita Bhoite, Shri. Ashutosh Gaikwad, Smt. Shruti Dongre and Shri. Vijayendra Acharya donated a combined total of more than 150 books to our library.

Apasarjanam Foundation helped us towards the purchase of materials for drawing & Kathak training under Project Vikas.

We extend our thanks to all the above & other donors named & unnamed, without whose generosity our work would come to a standstill.

DONATE

(Donations are exempted
under section 80G of Income Tax Act)

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