

# **Parivaar Education Society**

**Bonogram, Bakhrahat Road**

**Kolkata-700104**

**West Bengal**



**Annual Report**

**2016 - 2017**

## **General Introduction**

Parivaar is a humanitarian service organization, based in 24 Parganas (S), West Bengal, and at present is chiefly working for total care and overall development of children from categories like orphans, girl children highly vulnerable to exploitation, victimization, and trafficking, street children, abandoned children, extremely impoverished children from tribal areas and other such highly vulnerable children at Parivaar Ashram, Village - Barkalikapur, P.O. Bakhrahat, District 24 Parganas (South), West Bengal.

Starting from scratch and thereafter developed brick by brick, Parivaar is being continuously developed and moulded into a unique institution transforming the lives of each of its residential members (children and adults) and acting as a training ground of highly dedicated life-committed grassroots workers. As on 1st April '17 there are 1529 resident children (986 boys and 543 girls) at Parivaar, making it the largest and high-quality residential program for children from impoverished strata in West Bengal.

Children are admitted at a young age of 4 to 10 into Parivaar. Each resident child once admitted into Parivaar is under the care and custody of Parivaar till higher education (graduation/post-graduation) and subsequent job placement and settlement into the future phase of life. Parivaar is behind each child and pave his/her way into any future career which he/she is aspiring for and showing promise of making to, whether it is a stream graduation in humanities, commerce or sciences, or a professional degree education. For example, children showing aptitude for meritorious professional lines like engineering or medicine or any other such lines is trained and fully supported (just as parents do for their own children) till completion of that higher education and subsequent placement. Our earliest set of children have been gainfully employed in many different career paths like nursing, accountancy, hospitality and many other skills and professional lines.

Parivaar also acts as a hub for multifarious service activities for scores of the villages in the vicinity. At the Parivaar Ashram campus is also located Parivaar's own Formal School 'Amar Bharat Vidyapeeth' in which the resident children of Parivaar study.

## **Our Ethos and Inspirations**

Parivaar's mission is inspired by the clarion call of 'Service of Divine in Man' in a reverential spiritual attitude, in a spirit of worship given by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

## **Vision**

Parivaar's vision is to change the lives of destitute and vulnerable children in a loving and caring environment, and through the benefits of long-term education creating the soil on which children can realize their full potential.

## **Our Beginning**

Parivaar was started by Vinayak Lohani (an alumnus of IIT Kharagpur and IIM Calcutta), who, inspired by spiritual and humanistic ideals of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, decided to devote his entire life for serving 'Divine in Man' as taught by Swami Vivekananda. Vinayak Lohani gave up the prospect of highly lucrative corporate career by not taking any placement from IIM. Immediately after passing out of IIM in 2003, with just 3 children in a small rented building with almost no financial resources, Vinayak started Parivaar. Till the level of 15 children at Parivaar, he used to take some lectures for students appearing for Management entrance examinations and through that could meet the expenses. Gradually people began to be inspired by this dedicated service and started to support the initiative and the number of children at Parivaar grew. At the end of 2004, Parivaar could purchase its own land to develop its permanent campus. Parivaar's mission and

theme began to attract dedicated youth, many of whom joined Parivaar as resident workers and began to become bearers of this mission.

### **About the Founder**

Vinayak Lohani, the Founder of Parivaar ([www.parivaar.org](http://www.parivaar.org)), did B.Tech from Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (2000) and MBA from Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (2003). He did not appear for the placement process at IIM, and immediately after his MBA, started Parivaar. The normal career-path of a mainstream corporate career following degrees from two of the most prestigious institutes in India ensures a highly lucrative future, but Vinayak Lohani sacrificed this to start Parivaar.

He was inspired by the spiritual and humanistic ideals of Swami Vivekananda, and with just 3 children in a small rented building with almost no financial resources, Vinayak started Parivaar. As on 1st April '15 Parivaar's Residential Institution has 1529 resident children (986 boys and 543 girls) and is considered to be a model institution for caretaking and overall development of children from destitute backgrounds in a residential setting. It is also the largest free residential institution for children from impoverished backgrounds in whole of West Bengal.

Vinayak Lohani is a member of several committees of Government of India, and serves on Board of many civil society organisations.

### **Academic Background**

- Graduation (B.Tech) from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur.
- MBA from Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Calcutta.

### **Awards and Honours**

- National Award for Child Welfare 2011 presented by the Hon. President of India at the RashtrapatiBhavan.
- Sanskriti Award 2011, country's premier award for young achievers in 2011 from the Former President of India Dr APJ Abdul Kalam.
- CNN-IBN's 'Young Indian Leader of the Year Award' for 2012.
- IIM Calcutta's 'Distinguished Alumnus Award' (one of the 9 recipients selected out of 8000 alumni of the institute in last 50 years) awarded in 2011 on occasion of Institute's Golden Jubilee.
- IIT Kharagpur's 'Distinguished Alumnus Award' awarded in 2014- Youngest recipient in the history of the award.
- Swami Ranganathananda Memorial Humanitarian Award 2014 presented at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture Calcutta
- 'Swami Vivekananda Sewa Samman' presented by Hon. Governor of West Bengal
- Telegraph 'Special Honour' conferred by Telegraph Education Foundation Calcutta in 2014.
- 'Spirit of Mastek Award' conferred by IT Company Mastek Corporation
- 'Karmaveer Puraskar' 2011 presented by International Confederation of NGOs
- 'Transforming India through Transforming Indians' felicitation from Chinmaya Mission Kolkata
- Rotary Club of Calcutta Megacity Vocational Excellence Award 2012.

- Rotary Club of Calcutta Metropolitan Vocational Excellence Award 2014.
- 'Bhaorao Deoras Sewa Samman' 2015 presented at Lucknow by Hon Governor, Uttar Pradesh.

### **Roles with Government of India**

- Induction into Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) (2015 onwards), the apex consultational forum in Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India.
- Induction into the National Committee for Promotion of Social and Economic Welfare constituted by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India (2014-2017)

[http://dor.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/revenue/files/joined\\_document.pdf](http://dor.gov.in/sites/upload_files/revenue/files/joined_document.pdf)

- Induction into the Advisory Council of KendriyaVidyalayaSangathan (overseeing 1100 KVs across the country)

[http://dor.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/revenue/files/joined\\_document.pdf](http://dor.gov.in/sites/upload_files/revenue/files/joined_document.pdf)

- Inducted into the Governing Board of Childline India Foundation (2014 onwards), constituted by the Ministry of Women and Child which manages 24 hour child helpline services across nearly 350 towns in India.

<http://www.childlineindia.org.in/governingboard.htm>

- Inducted as a Member of Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation (BRLF) (2015 onwards), set up by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, as a funding and capacity-building institution towards accelerating sustainable action in the domain of rural livelihoods.
- Induction into Government of India's Ministry of Women and Child's Working Group for the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2011).

### **Background and Admission Process into Parivaar**

#### **How Do Children Come to Parivaar?**

Generally, children admitted into Parivaar are orphans, street kids, children with critically-ill parents and no other family support, and children from other vulnerable backgrounds, including single-parent households, kids from areas where exploitation and victimization, especially of girls, is common, and kids from highly impoverished rural and tribal areas where starvation and malnutrition are rampant, and where daily income per family is less than 1\$. All these children — though from diverse backgrounds — have the common characteristic that their destinies can be changed with access to clean and safe living and through education. If these children are nurtured in a residential setting where their basic needs are met, they can focus on the new future possible to them with structured learning leading to university-level education.

Parivaar helps children achieve the goals they set for themselves. We support them in choosing a career for which they have interest and aptitude, and help them pursue a degree to make that career a reality. Some of our earliest residents have now moved into careers in engineering, nursing, and accountancy, just to name a few.

Parivaar receives approximately 2000 cases of vulnerable children a year by field organizations, relatives of the child in question, or through concerned non-family members. After filtering Prima Facie information, cases for site visits and detailed investigations are short-listed. Parivaar has a special team that conducts site inquiries from where the case-request has come. This team visits the child's location and collects a detailed profile, facts and information on him based on the interaction with his referring persons/entity and other possible sources. This site report is then discussed and deliberated, and the severity of the need of the child to be admitted to Parivaar is assessed and a decision is made. The important parameters looked into while admitting into Parivaar are:

1. Parivaar accepts kids between 4 and 10 years of age, though certain exceptions are made.
2. The child should want and be able to stay at Parivaar through university enrollment. Just as in any family, we believe children should be supported by their family – in this case Parivaar – until they are self-sufficient.
3. Generally, along with one child all his/her siblings are also admitted into Parivaar. We believe it does not make sense to develop a bright future for one and leave others to languish behind. Parivaar's principle is that all siblings should progress together so that their familial bonding remains intact into the future.

### **Children profile at Parivaar:**

1. As on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017, there are in all 1529 resident children at Parivaar (986 boys and 543 girls).
2. Out of them 1113 are from highly impoverished tribal pockets from districts of Bankura, Purlia, Midnapore (W), Birbhum West Bengal and Singhbhum, Saraikela, Ranchi and Giridih in Jharkhand.
3. From non-tribal areas i.e. 416 children, the children have either lost both the parents or have only mother who is in very difficult circumstances of deprivation. These are children of high vulnerability prone to exploitation, child labor, vulnerability of being used by anti-social elements, child labor, conditions of homelessness etc.

### **Parivaar Institutional Units**

#### **1. Parivaar Vivekananda Sevashram**

This is the boys' residential campus of Parivaar, home to 956 resident boys and 80 male Sevavratees. It has all facilities like Kitchens, Dining halls, general purpose halls with projectors, prayer halls, computer labs, library, and a huge playground having 2 football fields, a volleyball court, and a cricket field. It is also the venue of Parivaar's 7-Day Athletic Track and Field Week.

## **2. Parivaar Sarada Teertha**

This is the girls' residential campus of Parivaar, home to 543 girls and about 40 plus female sevavratees. It has all facilities like Kitchens, Dining halls, general purpose halls with projectors, prayer halls, toy rooms, computer labs, library, and a playground.

## **3. Parivaar Nivedita House**

This is an annexe block of the Boys campus and houses about 50n resident boys.

## **4. Parivaar Bonogram Centre**

This is the place where Parivaar started in 2003. It also acts as a reserve block where from time to time about 50 resident boys can be accommodated.

## **5. Parivaar Amar Bharat Vidyapeeth**

This is Parivaar's formal school and is a West Bengal Board affiliated High School. Its main building is adjacent to the Parivaar Vivekananda Sevashrama and has a subsidiary unit at Parivaar Sarada Teertha.

## **6. Parivaar Administrative and Village Welfare Block**

This is the unit handling various local area welfare programs. Some administrative functions are also handled from here.

### **Key Operational Ingredients:**

#### **1. Admission Process & Parameters**

- ▶ 2000 cases of such children come to our notice annually.
- ▶ Neediness assessment by filtering Prima facie information, Site visit, detailed investigation.
- ▶ Special Enquiry team visits the child's existing location and collects detailed profile, facts and information.

#### **2. Bridging (Fast-Learning) and Tutorship Programs**

- ▶ Youngest admitted children (aged 4, 5, and 6) are taken into most initial classes.
- ▶ Children who have age of 8 to 12 and no exposure to education trained 'Fast-Learning Bridge Course' and the admitted into a grade suitable for their age.
- ▶ Along with the formal schooling a strong after school tutorship (2 to 4 hour daily) ensures continuous good academic performance.

#### **3. Amar Bharat Vidyapeeth(ABV)**

- ▶ Parivaar's own High Quality Formal School having medium of instruction English as well as Bengali.
- ▶ Currently from Class 1 to Class 10.

After Class 10, children continue to stay at Parivaar and under Parivaar's care, and attend outside institutions for higher secondary and colleges / university.

#### **4. Handholding through entire Growth Path (Kindergarten to Higher Education / Placement)**

- ▶ Each resident child once admitted into Parivaar is under the care and custody of Parivaar till higher education and subsequent job placement and settlement into the future phase of life.
- ▶ For example, children showing aptitude for meritorious professional lines is trained and fully supported (just as parents do for their own children) till completion of that higher education and subsequent placement.
- ▶ Our earliest set of children is in career-paths like nursing, accountancy and many other professional lines etc.

#### **4. Skill Programs**

After Grade 12, Parivaar kids undergo various Skill Programs which are in collaboration with National Skill Development Corporation affiliate partners. In past our kids have undergone Skill Programs in areas like Hospitality, Nursing, IT and BPO, Paramedical, Aviation, Beauty & Wellness, Electronics a& Home Appliances, Computer Gardware & Networking etc. All the candidates after this get jobs. About 33 boys and girls have been gainfully employed from amongst our earliest batches.

#### **5. Fooding & Nutrition**

- ▶ Daily 4 cooked meals (Breakfast, lunch, Evening snacks, dinner) along with an early morning starter
- ▶ Same food partaken by all Sevavratees as well as children at the same venue
- ▶ Cooking done with high standards of hygiene.

#### **6. Health, Diet, Hygiene and Medical System**

- ▶ Scientifically planned healthy and balanced diet.
- ▶ Water-purifiers in each residential block.
- ▶ Additional dietary supplements given to children as per their needs.
- ▶ 24-hour medical care by a team of 7 medical personnel.
- ▶ Parivaar Ambulances to meet any exigencies.
- ▶ Separate Medical File for each child to maintain continuous health and medical history.

## **Key Milestones:**

- ▶ 6 batches of Grade 10 children pass with 97% doing on their first attempt despite being very late started in education.
- ▶ 4 batches of Grade 12 children pass with 100% doing on their first attempt despite being very late starter in education.
- ▶ 33 children getting employable after skill programs with NSDC affiliates after their graduation / higher secondary in respectable firms.
- ▶ Some children also working with Parivaar as interns in important roles along with doing their graduation and being developed for frontline leadership in future years.

## **Health, Diet, Hygiene and Medical System**

### **A Brief Outline**

The diet at Parivaar has been scientifically planned and set by specialist dieticians, making the diet very healthy and balanced. Same meals are partaken by all the members (children and Seva-vratees) at the same venue and at the same hours. The water consumed by all the inmates is purified water as there are water-purifiers in each residential block.

Parivaar has a team of six medical personnel (Medical supervisor and nurses) living at Parivaar, thus ensuring 24-hour medical care to everyone. Their task is to administer routine drugs like those for cold, cough, skin infections, cuts/bruises, stomach ailments etc, do preliminary treatment while keeping the sick under observation during fever, illness. We have doctors visiting twice a week and inspect the children who face complaints during that period. We maintain a detailed medical history for each resident child. Parivaar Ambulances are stationed 24 hour at both Parivaar Boys' Residential Campus as well as Parivaar Sarada Teertha Girls' Residential Campus, and is used to meet any exigencies.

### **Detailed Medical Documentation for each child**

Each child at Parivaar has a separate medical file in which all periodic inspections by the doctors are documented in a standard template and maintained in that child's file. All prescriptions, hospitalization documents, ailment histories, allergies/susceptibilities are also documented and appended in this file. Thus, a continuous health and medical history of each is being continuously developed and recorded. As a result, any new doctor can be consulted and just by going through the respective Health File he gets the exact snapshot of the health status and health history of the child.

### **Initiatives in Tribal Areas**

#### **Parivaar's initiatives in Tribal Areas and admission of children from highly impoverished tribal areas – A Brief Outline of the Outreach**

Parivaar being the hub of training of Seva-vratees, is also the base for many other projects serving the rural areas in 24 Parganas district as well as far-off tribal areas in districts of Midnapore (West), Bankura, Purulia, Birbhum in West Bengal and Singhbhum (East) in Jharkhand. These areas are home to some of the most impoverished tribes of the country. The whole population suffers from

malnutrition and generation after generation. People in this belt live a life totally unlit by the lamp of education and in thoroughly sub-human conditions.

Through rigorous field-work Parivaar has developed its field-network over more than 100 such villages in tribal areas, with a contact person from the local community in each of these villages. We have been able to develop this network through Jana-Sabhas (community meetings), engaging with the community, and winning their trust and confidence. The guardians/relatives of the children already admitted into Parivaar from these areas act as field volunteers, and help in expanding the outreach, due-diligence during admissions of more children, and maintaining continuous relationship with these areas.

Two main tribes, Sabar and Birhore, are the main beneficiaries of Parivaar's tribal service programs.

### **Non-academic Child Development Activities**

#### **A. Sports & Recreation**

- Participation of both elders and children in all facets of extra-academic activities.
- Regular competitive matches.
- Systematic practice and coaching.
- Cricket pitch, Football field, Volleyball court, Badminton.
- Parivaar Track & Field Competition organized every year which goes for 7 days.
- Children movies, inspirational and educational films shown on weekends.
- Collection of good movie DVDs in many Indian as well as foreign languages.

#### **B. General Knowledge Development and Reading Habits**

- Television News, Documentaries, Newspaper, Periodicals ensures good level of General Knowledge.
- Extensive Library.

#### **C. Educational Excursions to outside places**

- Excursions are frequent and generally to places which provide not just entertainment but also have educational value. Visits to places like museums, art galleries, exhibitions, libraries, theatre, planetarium etc. are generally taken up.

#### **D. Festival Celebrations**

Celebrations like Holi, Diwali, Christmas, Id-ul-Fitar, Saraswati Puja, birthdays of important national figures and freedom-fighters are also observed every year along with national festivals like Independence Day and Republic Day. On all these occasions, talks and discourses are conducted in order to put forth the deeper meaning behind these occasions, so that these occasions can also become medium of character-building and that festivals do not get reduced merely to fun and play. Talks on historical and inspiring themes happen frequently for all children as well as elders. Plays and 'song & dance' items are also there.

#### **E. Literary and Cultural Events**

- On Parivaar's Annual calendar there are at least 15 days of Cultural functions.
- Plays, Rabindra Sangeet, Rabindra Nritya, Recitations, Speech-making etc.

### **Village Service Activities**

- Education Excellence Program for village students: Books, stationery, emergency pecuniary help within 10 kms radius of Parivaar to more than 2000 students every year from BPL families.
- Ambulance Service for village: 24 hours service in adjoining rural areas.

- Annadan Pariseva (Monthly Food stock Scheme) for old and ailing villagers: Above 800 beneficiaries, stipulated rice, dal (lentils), oil etc.

### Parivaar's Support Base

People all over the world have come together to support Parivaar since our founding in 2003.

### Individual Supporters

We are lucky to have so many from the Indian Institute of Technology and the Indian Institute of Management alumni supporting our work. We would also like to acknowledge each and every person, from every corner of the globe, who contributes to the changed destinies of the children of Parivaar.

We would also like to thank our Institutional Supporters, namely:

We would also like to thank our Institutional Supporters, namely:

Recent Supporters (For FY 2015-16 and FY 2016-17)

Infosys Foundation	Thermax
Deutsche Bank	eClerx
General Insurance Corporation	STAR TV
EMpower	Genesis Trust
Makemytrip	Sequoia Capital
ICRA Online	ACRE (Assets Care & Reconstruction Enterprise)
Tudor Foundation	Manyavar

Supporters in Past (Before FY 2015-16)

CLSA Chairman's Trust	Edelweiss
Citibank	India Infoline
Johnson & Johnson	State Bank of India
United Bank of India	UCO Bank
HDFC	Mastek

Supporters in Kind

Frank Ross Pharmacy (Emami Group)	Linc
-----------------------------------	------

For visiting Parivaar and other general enquiries please email at [info@parivaar.org](mailto:info@parivaar.org)

We prefer emails to phone calls for visits or any other kind of organizational enquiry. But one can use the following contact numbers too.

(91-33) 2495-4118 / 24954171 / 98317-77764 (During IST 10:30 AM to 7:00 PM)

### The Governing Body and Remittance Mechanism

Parivaar is registered in India as the PARIVAAR EDUCATION SOCIETY. The Founder Mr. Vinayak Lohani is the Secretary of the Governing Body. Rest of the composition is as follows:

Prof. Sougata Ray – President  
Professor, Strategic Management Group  
Indian Institute of Management Calcutta

Mr. Sumit Bose  
Former Finance Secretary, Government of India

Mr. Ramesh Kacholia  
Philanthropist and Convener, Caring Friends  
Mumbai

Mr. Saurabh Mittal  
Entrepreneur, Singapore

Mr. Shyamsundar Agarwal  
Industrialist, Kolkata

Mr. Rajesh Raman  
Financial Services Professional, Singapore

Ms. Sreedevi Menon  
California, USA

Ms. Megha Poddar Modi  
Entrepreneur, Kolkata

Mr Deepak Ahuja  
Technology Professional, Bangalore

### **Parivaar Seva-vratis (Our Workforce) :**

Seva-vratis are a deeply committed group of people and have shown tremendous dedication to the spirit and values of Parivaar.

Seva-vratis, many of whom have been with Parivaar through initial stages become a deep part of the organization's history and traditions. We can therefore say each one of them is an essential piece of Parivaar, not only crucial in the present state of operations but critically important for the actualization of Parivaar's continued growth and future goals. It is only with such highly dedicated, capable and long-term devoted workers that we are able to take a long-term view of what it means to change the course of life in India.

#### **Parivaar Sarada Teertha**

Ms Sandhya Nag          Campus Superintendent  
Graduate and in Parivaar since 2004

Mr Raju Ram              Operations Anchor  
Graduate and in Parivaar since 2011

Mr Partha Naskar        Operations Co-Anchor  
Graduate and in Parivaar since 2011

### **Parivaar Vivekananda Sevashram**

Mr Gopal Das            Superintendent

In Parivaar since 2010

Mr Dolan Giri            Operations Anchor

In Parivaar since 2009

### **Amar Bharat Vidyapeeth and other Academic functions**

Ms Ankita Thakur        Chief Academic Anchor

Masters (Education) from Azim Premji University

Mr Sanat Biswas        School Administrator

Graduate and in Parivaar since 2006

Mr Sandip Adhikari     School co-Administrator and Tutorship Program Coordinator

Graduate and in Parivaar since 2006

### **Infrastructure Management**

Mr Md. Anwar Khan     Engineer and Infrastructure Manager

M.Tech (MNIT Allahabad) and in Parivaar since 2013

Mr Jayanta Sanati       Site Supervision and Maintenance

In Parivaar since 2006

### **Kitchen and Dining Operations**

Mr Pradip Pal            Manager

Graduate and in Parivaar since 2009

### **Support and Administrative Functions**

Mr Suvankar Kar        Assistant to the Founder and General Administrative Functionary

Graduate and in Parivaar since 2006

Mr Nimai Saha            Child Admissions and Guardian Relationships

Graduate and in Parivaar since 2004

Mr Somsankar Dutta     Chief Accountant

Graduate and in Parivaar since 2005

Mr Pratik Dutta         Orders, Procurement and Costs Management

Masters from Calcutta University and in Parivaar since 2013

### **Remittance Mechanism – Within India**

Parivaar is a registered charity in India and all contributions fall under the Income Tax Exemptions Section 80(G) of the Income Tax Act.

Cheques can be made out and sent to:

Parivaar Education Society

Bonogram, Bakhrahat Road, P.O. Raspuja, Kolkata 700104

\* Please include our phone number, 033 24954118, and include an address for tax exemption purposes.

Bank Transfer into our State Bank of India A/c. :

A/C Name : State Bank of India, IIM Joka branch, Kolkata

A/C No. :

\* Please email us as soon as you have made a remittance through a funds transfer.

### **From Another Country (Foreign Contributions)**

Parivaar has a valid FCRA license granted by the Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi. We can accept donations in any currency from any country.

These donations must be credited into our FCRA a/c:

FCRA Registration No: 147110818

The Bank details of the FCRA a/c are as follows:

- Bank Name : State Bank of India
- Branch Name : IIM Joka Branch Kolkata
- Account No. : 10120247357
- Name of Account : PARIVAAR EDUCATION SOCIETY
  
- MICR Number : 700002130
- Current/Savings Account : Savings
- SWIFT Code : SBININBB645
- IFSC Code : SBIN0006210

### **In United States**

Arpan Foundation, a registered 501c3 that processes a tax deductible donation to Parivaar free of charge. Website: [www.arpanfoundation.org](http://www.arpanfoundation.org) • Email: [parag@arpanfoundation.org](mailto:parag@arpanfoundation.org)

### **Memories from the Past**

#### **Excerpts from a Parivaar Newsletter from May 2004**

##### **The First Day in School**

Parivaar has now 45 children, 30 of our Parivaar children are going to St. Elizabeth School located on the busy Diamond Harbour Road, at a distance of about Four Kilometers from our home, Parivaar Centre Bonogram. It was a challenge to work out admissions of our children as they did not have any exposure to prior schooling at all. The School arranged the admission tests and it was decided that whosoever would pass the test, shall be admitted to the class he/she was appropriate for.

16th of March was a big day of Parivaar. The batch of thirty students appeared for admission test on this day. The preparations started on the night before. The answer sheets were to be readied and pencils sharpened. The clothes to wear were to be kept tidy. We all woke up early, and after all had taken their breakfast the children were taken to the school. It was a short test and we were delighted to know all the children were successful and had gained admissions into the school. A few got admissions to Class 4, others to Classes 3, 2 and 1. The children of Parivaar finally joined a reputed formal school and were now "school-going students". The fees and all other necessary papers were

submitted. A tailor was appointed and he came to take measurement amidst much excitement among the children. The school began its new academic sessions on the 5th of May.

On 5th of May the children at Parivaar were all up in the wee hours of the morning. They just could not wait for the School Bus (a private bus Parivaar had engaged for the purpose of school transportation) to take them to their first day in school. The school hours are from 6.30 to 10.30 AM. The children woke up at 5.00 AM and readied themselves for a new life. The children were looking very smart in their new uniform and their faces beamed with great pride and joy.

Just before they were to board the bus to their long and arduous journey of life, Vinayak led them to prayer, and gave a talk making them realize the importance of that day in their lives. The children were visibly overwhelmed, and one by one touched Vinayak's feet and sought his blessings. This was an extremely emotional and momentous occasion in the life of Parivaar. We offered silent prayers to the Almighty that the first step had been taken with hope of changing destinies of these children, and that having walked the first step He may bestow upon us strength so that the subsequent steps become easier to take. The mission of Parivaar of changing destinies had begun and there is no turning back now.

The words of Vivekananda rang true to our ears, "it is not the work of a day and the path is full of the most deadly thorns, Come then, look in the face brethren, it is a grand task and we are so low. But we are sons of light and children of God. Glory unto the Lord, we will succeed. Hundreds will fall in the struggle and hundreds will be ready to take up the task. You know the disease, you know the remedy, only have faith, sympathy – fiery faith, fiery sympathy, Glory unto the Lord, march on, the Lord is our General. Do not look back to see who falls – forward, onward ! Thus and thus we shall go on, brethren, One falls, and another takes up the work".