

January 2004 Newsletter

Dear Parivaar donor,

This is to thank you for joining hands with us for the cause of changing destinies of underprivileged and marginalized children.

The Centre starting on 7th of Jan houses 16 children currently and in this month 20 more children are being admitted in the Family. We are fully hopeful that all 40 children that were identified for Parivaar Centre this year would therefore have a new life.

Coming April, these children would be admitted in formal schools of Kolkata, each into a class corresponding to his/her preparedness, age and abilities. The children are currently being prepared for admissions in these schools and gear up for demands of formal education.

Many of you would be picturing the Parivaar Centre in your minds. The Centre is housed in a 3 storey building on the outskirts of Kolkata. The facility is on a rental contract for three years after which it could be renewed. But we are sure that given the ever-increasing support that we have and the work we are doing, we would not require rental premises for long.

The pictures of the Centre, the children (in different moods) would be on our website very soon. With extremely limited manpower these things though essential had to be relegated to low priority because all our efforts in the last one month were directed towards getting the children settle and gel with each other as a family. And of course that was no easy a task.

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Beginning of a Mission

On 7th of January, Parivaar Centre started with first three children - Shambhu, Sanatan and Satyen, making Parivaar Centre their home. Spending the cold January winter in a damp mud shanty, half of which roof was non-existent, the mattress and quilts at the Centre appeared to be a different world to Satyen. It was beginning of a mission, building of a family that will stay together for years, a home where one would feel valued, cared for, wanted, and respected.

When the first few children came on 7th, not even the Bank Account of Parivaar was in place as the organisation was registered only in December. All we had was a conviction, a faith that let's go on fulfilling whatever we are capable of, rest would be willed by the Force that drives the world. With resources just to meet the needs of three children for a month, the plunge was taken.

Over the next few weeks came the contributions from those who had committed their support, and thus did their bit in shaping the destinies of these children. This force of individual goodwill has strongly manifested itself in setting up of this Centre. Most of them were never known to us until they joined hands in this mission. The fact that they placed their total support and invaluable trust in us and our cause, is itself a vindication that the world is indeed a beautiful place to live in and that we can make it even more lovely for the generations to come.

Bringing back the individual

Isn't it the individual who constitutes any system, any institution in the world. For any problems that that the world faces who is responsible? Is it 'the system' or 'the individual'? Blaming the system is evading responsibility and this is what has been going on. The world can change for better only if we, the constituent individuals, meet that change in our own selves. Systemic changes with no change in 'the individual' would rot into their former ways as the individuals would manipulate it as per their own nature.

This core conviction of ours is reflected in organizing the Parivaar Centre. One of the aims of Parivaar is to bring back 'the lost and disenchanting individual' to rally in the onward march of the world, get a first hand feeling of shaping the world we envision for our subsequent generations.

What we envision for the children at Parivaar?

Is disparity an economic phenomenon? If it were, then the world would always remain iniquitous; for the economic status of individuals would always be different, as there are different tasks to be done in the world, and the skills/abilities of individuals would be different.

Isn't inequity is a mental phenomenon. A person may be economically impoverished but if he can raise his head high, feeling that he is no less equal than any other person in the world, there is no inequity.

Similarly, the elitist notions rife in many of the privileged ones are purely their psychological make-up.

When a 'privileged one' realises that he could have been in place of 'the underprivileged' in front of him, constantly struggling merely to survive, he would be overwhelmed by the realisation that it's that inexplicable 'pure chance' that has been shaping us. Our children could well have been in place of millions of other children, starving and naked, and for whom living their lives itself is a challenge.

We 'the privileged' stimulate ourselves by searching for a meaning to life. Can we have even a momentary identification with those for whom every moment of life has got only two meanings - to survive or to perish.

You would soon receive the profile of the child you are supporting so that you can be in personal contact with him/her in his formative years and that you can rejoice in the same way as one sees a seed grow into a fully grown plant.

We cannot thank you enough for your support. But do we need to? Are we all not co-workers in the same grand task of building the world of our dreams.

Yours Sincerely,

Parivaar Team