

Autism & Disability e-News of 'Tamana'

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From the President's Desk

As the founder of Tamana I had this vision of seeing every student of Tamana happy and smiling. I can say it with immense pride that we have achieved this feat. Today the visitors at Tamana are taken in by the happy faces they see. They are overwhelmed by the affection and friendliness of the students. This happiness is reflected because of the feeling that is instilled in them that they are not lesser to anyone. They are given unconditional love, affection and acceptance at Tamana. The focus is on their ability rather than disability. They are given a myriad of experiences which inspires them to excel and overcome their disability. We motivate them to have aspirations. All efforts are made to remove hurdles from their path and smoothen their journey of reaching their aspirations. Towards this end we have given in-house jobs to ten students of Tamana. They have been placed as trainees in the Bakery, Canteen, Stitching unit, File Making Unit and as Assistants in Front Office. They are earning stipends. This small step has broadened the length of the smile of these Trainees. The other students are now getting



motivated to take up similar assignments. There is now fire in their bellies to work and earn. The gleam in their eyes tells us that we are on the right path. I feel optimistic that the trainees will be mainstreamed in the near future.

Dr. Shayama Chona

A step toward self reliance . . .

In a step towards economic rehabilitation, nine students of Nai Disha and one student of Tamana Special School have been selected as interns for different vocations being taught at Tamana schools. In the second half of their day at school they will be placed in different vocational departments as interns and will earn a stipend of Rs. 1000 per month.

The selected trainees are:

Arti Laul and Sonu Jain - **Bakery Assistants**
Anjali Punetha - **Assistant to Canteen In-charge**
Kaustubh Sachdeva - **Assistant in File making Unit**
Tanya Soni and Saumya Gupta - **Assistants to Teacher at Tamana Special School.**
Tej Kiran and Ruhi Ansari - **Assistants in Stitching Unit**
Sharad Dang and Arsh Khanna - **Sales person in Bakery.**

Tamana Winter Carnival

Tamana's Winter Carnival, which has become an annual event since the last 5 years, was held on 15th December, 2010 at the British High Commissioner's residence. The association between Britain and Tamana is very old. The inauguration of Tamana's first school was done by the late Lady Diana, Princess of Wales.

Tamana's annual Winter Carnival's sole purpose is to showcase the products developed by the special needs students.

This year's Carnival was inaugurated by the High Commissioner's wife, Lady Arabella Stagg, Mrs. Vandana Luthra (Chairperson, VLCC), Mrs. Anuradha Kumar (Chairperson, Tamana), Mr. Sunil Dutt (President, HP) and Dr. Shayama Chona (President, Tamana). The carnival began with the students of Tamana singing Christmas carols and presenting a cultural programme. Tamana Chona performed a scintillating dance at the inaugural ceremony. This year 150 vendors and NGOs participated in the carnival, exhibiting and selling their high end products. The food court had participation from renowned restaurants of Delhi. The venue and the attractions of the carnival pulled thousands of Delhites to the event. Though it was a working day but people started coming since morning and



Dr. Shayama Chona, Mrs. Vandana Luthra and Lady Arabella Stagg dancing at the Carnival

by afternoon the venue was jam packed. The food court stalls were all sold out.

If you have missed attending last year's carnival please make sure to join us this Year.

World Autism Awareness Day - Walk for autism

On 8th April, 2011 students of Tamana along with students of Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Tagore International School, Spring Dales, Guru Harkishan Public School, D.P.S., R.K.Puram and a number of other schools, took part in an inclusive walk to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day. They walked together from the Tamana Autism Centre, School of Hope to Priya Cinema Complex. The walk was flagged off by Mrs. Bharkha Singh, the Local MLA of Delhi Vidhan Sabha. The special students of Tamana wore posters which had messages like "I may be different but aren't we all?", "I am not sick I am Special", "Include me into your world".

At the final destination, Tamana teachers performed



'Nukkad Natak' to create awareness about Autism to sensitize the students and also the general public about autism. The walk for autism was supported by Coca Cola India.

Mr. Gopinath's visit - Signing of MOU for ONGC Centre for Vocational Rehabilitation

Last year ONGC approved a proposal from Tamana for setting up a new vocational centre at Tamana.

Mr. Gopinath, Chief of CSR, ONGC, visited the School Of Hope, Tamana Autism Centre on 25th February, 2011 for signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between ONGC and Tamana for setting up ONGC Centre for Vocational Rehabilitation for the Differently Abled. After signing the MOU, Mr. Gopinath greeted each and every student personally. He was highly impressed with the facilities provided to the individual child. He appreciated the role of the teachers who work with these students with dedication and care.

After that he was escorted by Dr. Shayama Chona and Dr. Ritu Juneja to the Auditorium, where a cultural programme was organized for him by Tamana students. Sumudit, a Nai Disha student, acted as emcee for the function. Dr. Chona explained to the students how ONGC was giving support for helping them fulfil their aspirations. She assured that Tamana will use

every penny for giving wings to the aspiration of the young adults. Mr. Gopinath in his address complimented the students for their performance and skills. He promised that ONGC would always support Tamana's cause.



Mr. Gopinath meeting the students

Government Of Japan Extends Grant Assistance For Tamana

The Embassy of Japan in India, under its scheme "Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects", decided to extend grant assistance of US\$63,892 to Tamana for setting up prefabricated structures, which would house work centres such as bakery, dry clean unit, food processing unit, tailoring unit and pottery unit. This grant will be used for meeting the growing needs for vocational education and economic rehabilitation of special needs students. Additional space was required in the existing schools to provide effective and sustainable vocational training. To this end, the Embassy of Japan has decided to grant assistance to set up work centres/sheltered workshops. Till date Tamana has been providing educational and vocational skills. Now the students have reached a stage where they are trained and ready to be placed. These students have been trained in vocations which utilize the modern day technologies that can be adapted to the needs of these individuals. The work centres will further refine their vocational skill and offer them employment in a safe and disabled friendly environment. The final aim is that each student becomes independent and self sufficient



The Ambassador of Japan with Dr. Shayama Chona

according to his or her own capabilities. Tamana plans to professionally train autistic and mentally challenged young adults in areas of tailoring, handicrafts, baking, pottery, laundry and food processing. Efforts will be made to transfer trained individuals to commercial organisations in the wider community or help parents to set-up work centres in their locality and absorb the trained individuals.

Special Educator from Tamana attends JENESYS East Asia Future Leaders Program in Tokyo

Boski Sharma, a special educator at Tamana Special School was nominated by Tamana for Japan Foundation's JENESYS East Asia Future Leaders Program: Social Welfare Group. The program was held in Tokyo from 26th February to 9th March, 2011. Till now 6000 youths have participated in JENESYS Future Leaders Program on different themes such as Cultural Diversity (2007), Sustainable Society-Nature (2008), Comprehensive Peace-Building Initiative (2010) and many others. This was the first time they chose the theme of Social Welfare. 26 participants from 14 different countries including Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, India, Australia, New Zealand, China, Korea and Japan were part of the

programme.

Targeting candidates to lead and forge the future of the next generation in various countries, this program aimed to promote a better understanding of Japan as well as to cultivate future leaders with an understanding of Japan in the various layers of society and fields through discussions on critical issues in East Asia so as to build a human network in the region. Participants were given opportunities to exchange information and discuss common issues with participants from different countries and to share a view in developing an international network under the theme of "Social Welfare - Self reliance of the Socially Vulnerable and Symbiosis with Globalised community."

Somnath attends National Camp by Special Olympics at Jodhpur, Rajasthan

Somnath, a student at the School of Hope and Rajeev Singh, a special educator at Tamana attended "Community Coaches Training Programme" organized by Rajasthan Government from 25th December, 2010 to 31st December, 2010. Somnath is a 16 year old autistic, non verbal boy. Somnath did not sleep in the night journey by bus. He took 2 days to get used to new people & the new environment. He initially felt insecure and clung to Rajeev, but slowly he began to get comfortable in the new environment. In the programme, educators were taught how to motivate & encourage these students through sports.



Somnath at the Camp

Visitors from EWHA Women's University, South Korea

A group of 22 student volunteers from EWHA Women's University, South Korea had meaningful moments at Tamana from 17th to 21st January, 2011. Prof. P.N. Ajita from the Korean Department of Jawaharlal Nehru University coordinated their visit. Students from two completely different countries spent great times exchanging cultures. For five days students and teachers from EWHA Women's University spent time helping teachers and students at Tamana. A pair of Korean students was placed in each class room for helping students. Volunteers and Tamana



Korean Volunteers performing

students did quite a lot of art work together such as collages, balloon art, and paper craft. Even though the Korean students and Tamana students spoke different languages they bonded immediately. On the last day, a show was put up by the volunteers which had Prof. Ajita as the Chief Guest. The show included traditional Korean dance, songs, Karate dance and creating a symphony through drums (made out of empty cartons). The volunteers distributed crayon boxes among students in the two schools.

Students from Tamana Special School and Nai Disha also performed for the visitors. Even though it lasted only a short time, the visitors had a wonderful time at Tamana. The purpose of this visit was to get to know an entirely new culture and we were successful in this.



Korean Volunteers performing Karate Dance

Workshop on Neuro-Feedback

On 28th January, 2011, Maj. N.K. Panday from Gunjan Human Karigar Pvt. Ltd., presented to the senior staff of Tamana a glimpse of the new intervention for individuals with disability: Neuro-Feedback.

Since the turn of the 20th century, biofeedback had been a popular intervention used for treating adults with disability and psychological disorders. However, neuro-feedback (or EEG biofeedback) as we know it now came to be only recently in 1993. It is based on principles of operant conditioning and neuronal regulation. The therapy now involves training of brain waves – alpha, beta, theta and SMR.

Maj. Panday began with discussing the efficacy of the intervention. He brought to our notice that recent research shows that neuro-feedback has high efficacy rates (upto 90%) for disorders such as ADHD, autism, anxiety, alcoholism, PTSD, sleep disorders and other cognitive dysfunctions. However, its efficacy for individuals with mental retardation, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder is questionable. Maj. Panday then went on to describe the typical neuro-feedback session along with the various equipments used for treatment of different disorders. He also demonstrated the most commonly used equipments and was able to help

us understand this complex, abstract concept in a very simple manner. He specified the use of neuro-feedback in children with autism, helping decrease behavioural symptoms such as aloofness and lack of attention and focus.

Recent research on neuro-feedback suggests highly positive results for children with autism. Specifically neuro-feedback training helps improve executive functions in children with autism – for some the source of all deficits in children with autism. Therefore, we, at Tamana, may consider the importance of developing an in-house neuro-feedback training unit as children with autism form the largest population in the school.

Bronze Medals Won in Yoga Competition

5 students of Tamana Special School - Farha Khan, Poornima Doomra, Tanya Soni, Meenal Pathania and Tushar Bhatia participated in the Yoga competition at SAHAN School, New Delhi and won bronze medals.

Valentine's Day celebrated as Friendship Day at Nai Disha



Valentine's Day was celebrated in a special way at Tamana when students from Springdale's School, Dhaula Kuan, New Delhi came to cement their long friendship with their special friends. In preparation for the event, Tamana students were busy making friendship bands and decorating the classrooms right from the morning of 14th February. They decorated the whole school with heart shaped balloons and streamers. The whole atmosphere was filled with festivity. The students of both schools exchanged friendship bands and then jived on the music of latest bollywood songs. When the Founder and President of Tamana, Dr. Shayama Chona joined the students their enthusiasm knew no bounds. Students tied friendship bands and pulled her for the jam session. Dr. Chona welcomes such interactions with schools and colleges as children are the ones who can bring change in the mindset and the perception of the public towards the People with Special Needs.

Lady Stagg visits Tamana

Lady Arabella Stagg, wife of British high Commissioner, finally fulfilled her promise of visiting the Tamana schools. She has been hosting the Tamana winter carnival at her residence since the last three years and had always expressed a desire to visit the schools. This year her resolve was firmer and she herself initiated the visit, which was a very pleasant surprise for us. On 21st December, 2010, Lady Stagg came with her daughter and her daughter's friend. Tamana students were very excited to organize a special morning assembly for them but Lady Stagg chose not to have that as she felt that it would upset the morning schedule of the students.

She visited all the classrooms in the school to get first hand information about the programme. The visitors showed keen interest in the activities of the students and interacted with the students. They were quite impressed



by the products made by the students. The young girls promised to return to the schools in their free time and work here as volunteers.

School Picnic at Tikli Bottom Farm

Mrs. Annie Howard who is a Tamana Board member, graciously organized a picnic for staff and students of Tamana at her farm in Tikli village (near Sohna) on 17th March, 2011. The picnic at Mrs. Howard's farm is an annual event which the staff and students wait for eagerly. Since the announcement of the picnic the excitement of the students knew no bounds. They made elaborate plans for the day. On the D day, they enjoyed the journey by bus. It was fun to see children sharing their snacks with each other and singing songs along the way.

Mrs. Howard had organized a magic show and a camel ride for the students. The magic show was performed by the village magician who showed magic using rings, pigeons, ropes, magic bag, balls, etc. The way he was unfolding each activity was very exciting and enthralling for the students. He had their full attention. Next the children queued for camel cart ride. Some of the autistic

children who were scared initially went for a camel ride when they saw others. One of the students was put along with his wheel chair on the camel cart. Students who had carried their cricket kits and badminton sets engaged in sports. In the end the students enjoyed the lunch and soft drinks offered to them. Even though the weather was unusually warm it did not dampen the spirit of the students who made the most of the opportunity. They boarded the bus for the journey home with a heavy heart. The return journey saw a quieter bus load of children who were exhausted after the day's adventure.

Like every year, the picnic was great fun for everybody and we are all now looking forward to next year's picnic at Tikli Bottom Farm.

Rotary Club of Delhi, South End donates equipment

Rotary Club of Delhi, South End has been associated with Tamana since very long. The club has always come forward to give support to the projects of Tamana by providing equipment in kind or funding the purchase of the equipment. In February, 2011 Rotary Club came forward to support our two Projects – Office Skills Training and Laundry Unit. Rotary Club donated one Photostat machine, one 4-in-1 Office machine and two washing machines to replace our older machines which had broken down beyond repair. The equipment was donated in the memory of Late Mr. Pradeep Chopra by his family. On 2nd February, The President of Rotary Club Rtn. Vinay Mahendru led a delegation of 42 members of the



Club. Nai Disha students organized a cultural function for the guests which included group and solo dances, songs etc. Dr. Shayama Chona, President, Tamana, welcomed the guests along with the students of Nai Disha. The students had prepared special gifts for the guests which were presented to them as token of thanks from Tamana.

About us

Tamana is an non-governmental organization for **Disability** providing services for **autism** and **multiple disabilities**. In Special Consultative Status with **United Nation's Economic and Social Council**.

Our Schools

Autism Centre - School of Hope
 Tamana Special School
 Nai Disha Vocational Centre
 Tamana Kindergarten - Pre-school for the underprivileged.

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