



# international *setu*

E-Newsletter....a bridge to Shishukunj

August 2021



Dear Bhaio and Baheno (Brothers and Sisters)

Namaste! Welcome to our Shishukunj International Setu. We are delighted to introduce our August 2021 edition of Shishukunj e-newsletter.

The last six months have been very different in terms of functioning of the *kendras*. We have all been restricted indoors due to COVID-19. We are facing new challenges everyday, which, in turn is offering new learning. Every Shishukunj *Kendra* has come forward to contribute towards making these times better, in one way or the other; be it through *Baal Pravriti*, *Sewa Pravriti* or *Shikshan Pravriti*.

Fun filled activities have been organized by each *Kendra* for the *baalako*, virtually. At the same time *kendras* have come forward in extending a helping hand to the communities in need.

We have a few news and thoughts to share – so hope you all enjoy and become enthused by reading of Shishukunj activities and stories making a difference around the world in this issue of Setu.

## August Setu includes...

- Editorial Page
- Shradhanjali–  
Jitendrabhai Bhatt
- Updates from  
Shishukunj Centres
- Updates from Affiliated  
Centres
- Articles from Old  
SETU
- Where Next?



## The drops of wisdom

- The lazier we are today, the more we have to do tomorrow.
- The secret of success is discipline, i.e. doing the right thing at the right time at the right place.
- It is not the hours you put in that counts but what you put in the hours.
- If you can't find a way out, lookup. If doubt, persist your elders.
- Don't let yesterday's failures bankrupt tomorrow's efforts.
- Don't just mark time; use time to make your mark.
- Our job is not to see through one another, but to see one another through.
- Success isn't judged by what we start but by what we finish.
- Your life is god's gift to you; what you do with it is your gift to god.
- If you make an excuse for your sin, your sin will never be excused.

-Ajay R. Singh  
Shishukunj Nairobi

(Extracted from an old SETU May-Jul 1988)

## Shradhanjali– Shree Jeetendrabhai Bhatt



*29 March 1927— 07 May 2021*

One of the founder members of Shishukunj in Karachi, Jeetendrabhai Bhatt or Jeetubhai, as he was fondly known, was born on 29th March, 1927 in a village near Limbdi in Surendranagar district of Gujarat. Even in his nineties, he was still young at heart. He used to recall his days with Shishukunj with such ease as if it all happened just yesterday; and he could talk about them for hours at a time.

His association with Shishukunj that started with his childhood days at “*Baalkan ji bari*”, Karachi, continued as a trustee of Shishukunj Vidyalaya, Dhrangadhra that was established by him in early 1950s. His early education at Sharda Mandir, Karachi, and the influence of a great teacher and story-teller, Harjivanbhai Somaiya, inspired him and Indubhai to start Shishukunj Sunday activity centre in Karachi.

After his graduation, Jeetubhai worked as Rural Development Officer in the newly independent India. As an officer, he worked a lot for development and rights of farmers & infrastructure development in villages. Later, he joined politics and remained an active politician for 30 years. He was also a Member of Parliament from Surendranagar. Jeetubhai took great pride in stating that he never gave or received any bribe in his political career.

After 19 years of completing his graduation, he appeared for the examination of Chartered Accountancy and became a certified Chartered Accountant in 1972. It is interesting to note that Jeetubhai’s father was also a CA, and his son is also a CA.

Alongside his work as a CA & a politician, he was also actively involved with Shishukunj Vidyalaya. He also established Law College, Art & Commerce College and Home Science College for girls. He worked a lot for creating awareness about education. Jeetubhai believed that today’s children are burdened with the pressures of education and technology. They are unable to enjoy their life freely. According to him, Shishukunj is an organization for overall development of children.



Jeetubhai was an example of the values that Shishukunj believes in. The ideas of discipline, cleanliness and values that Jeetubhai & Indubhai adopted from Sharda Mandir were not only passed on to Shishukunj but also in their respective families.

Whenever any member from Shishukunj fraternity met Jeetubhai, he used to fondly remember his younger days and working with Indubhai and other karyakars. It was a delight to see the childlike happiness on his face whenever he spoke about Shishukunj.

Jeetubhai left for the heavenly abode on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at ripe old age of 95, having lived a satisfying and selfless life. A true Shishukunj elder and *sevak*, he leaves behind a great legacy inspiration for many young karyakars.

Shishukunj salutes Jeetubhai for his zeal, energy, spirit, contribution and inspiration to the society.



*Jeetubhai with SIF team*



*Some Old Memories of Jeetubhai with Shishukunj Karyakars*



## Shishukunj Centres around the World

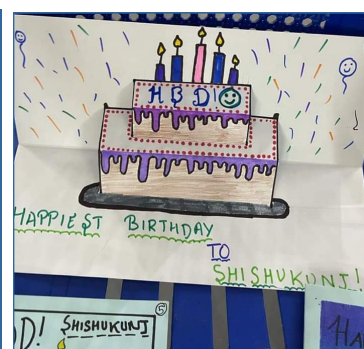
### AFRICA

**Dar-es-Salam:** Dipenbhai (E: [dipentransit@gmail.com](mailto:dipentransit@gmail.com))

Shishukunj Dar-es-Salam has been functioning in the physical space since May 2021. All the *baalako* and *kar-yakars* got together to celebrate 66th Foundation Day of Shishukunj DSM. Children made greeting cards for the occasion and cut cake to celebrate the special day.



Foundation Day Celebration



Greeting Card made by Children

**Limuru:** Anilbhai (E: [anilshah@acmecontainers.com](mailto:anilshah@acmecontainers.com)) /Marthaben Ndanu (E: [martha.ndanu1@gmail.com](mailto:martha.ndanu1@gmail.com))

The last year has been challenging for everyone in different ways. Acme Shishukunj Nursery has been supporting the children and their families by providing food kits to ensure they have access to the daily necessity of having food.

Mental health, learning through singing, participating in various outdoor activities and the importance of exercising have been important topics at the nursery. The children love learning through play and singing to better comprehend the concepts.

In June, few teachers from Limuru nursery, together with volunteers from Shishukunj Nairobi went to help distribute food parcels to needy families in Mathare slum. 1,000 families benefited from this initiative. This was a project run by MZ & KZ Foundation in collaboration with Shishukunj London and Help Change Lives, supported by Lions Club Peponi leader Dr Manoj Shah.

There are 57(PP2) children who have now transitioned to Grade One. As a token of appreciation, each child was given a trophy and a set of reading books. The children did not want to leave. The entire Shishukunj Limuru family will miss them a lot and wishes them all the best on their educational journey.

The school has welcomed 100 children to school to start their nursery education for PP1 class from 26th July 2021.



Food Parcel Distribution



Outdoor Activity



Visitors meeting the Children



**Mombasa:** Karsanbhai Velani (E: [karsanvelani@yahoo.com](mailto:karsanvelani@yahoo.com))

Shishukunj Mombasa activities continued to be online on zoom. Activities such as making of kites, digital zoom games, Mosaic/ Collage, Origami as well as Gujarati classes had been carried out online. Later Mid-July the kendra resumed its physical activities. This time the Kendra is functioning only on Sundays from 8:30 am to 12:00 noon.



*Prarthna at Kendra*



*Mosaic/Collage Activity– Online session*

**“My faith, in saying, that what is gained by the sword will also be lost by the sword, is imperishable.”**

**-Mahatma Gandhi**



**Nairobi:** (E: [kalaniketanshishukunj@gmail.com](mailto:kalaniketanshishukunj@gmail.com))

Kalaniketan Shishukunj Nairobi has been doing sessions virtually. These sessions run on alternate Sundays, whereby there are two groups, Jeevan Gooch, which was the 6-9 years age category, and Devchand Gooch, which was the 10 years and above age category.

Different fun activities such as craft sessions, cooking session, fun games, and workshops were planned for the children on virtual basis. Children would look forward to joining the sessions, though they all miss coming to Kendra.

Kalaniketan Shishukunj has also started fun games sessions, on Saturday evenings for children. Fun quizzes are conducted on Kahoot. All session are done virtually over Zoom and live streamed on the [Shishukunj Page](#).



*Online Kendra Activity*

*Biscuit Cake making Activity*

## ASIA

**Bengaluru:** Soundarya H (E: [soundarya.hanumanthappa@gmail.com](mailto:soundarya.hanumanthappa@gmail.com)) / [shishukunjbengaluru@gmail.com](mailto:shishukunjbengaluru@gmail.com)

The *karyakars* have made good progress in registering Shishukunj Bengaluru as a new Trust. The Trust is registered with the local authority and has received official documents for the Trust as well. They have applied for account opening and soon will have a bank account for the Trust.

**Baal Sabha:** The *karyakars* are engaging children by organising Sunday Baal sabha with those children who were part of Shishukunj Vidyalaya. They are also conducting baal sabha with girls of Vidyaranya – an ashram near HAL Bangalore that houses 45 girls up to Grade 10. Career opportunity seminars are conducted each week and are available on [Namma Shishukunj YouTube channel](#). Inspirational stories narrated by children are uploaded each week on YouTube. Several sessions have been conducted to create awareness about COVID and to encourage vaccination. Weekly news updates are presented to keep children updated about current world affairs and subsequently discussions are conducted. Drawing lessons are provided every alternative week owing to children with interest in arts. Folk songs are also taught.

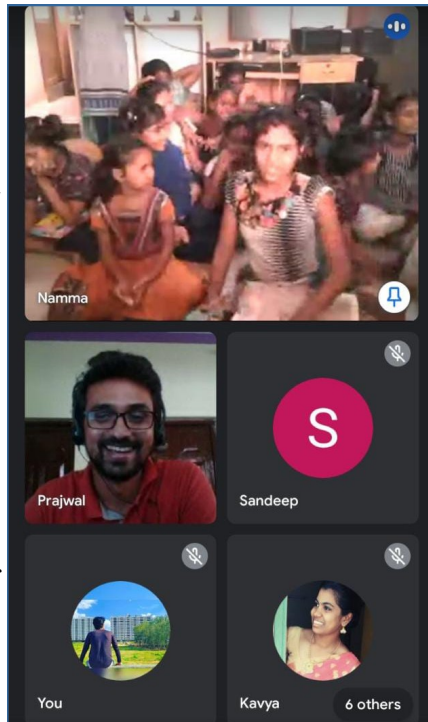
**Grocery/ Medicine Distribution:** The *karyakars* have been actively working with people in distress during these tough times. Help was provided to staff who were part of the local school. 8 families in Chamarajapet were provided with groceries and medicines. Daily wagers, who have lost jobs during second wave, were also supported with a month worth of ration, giving them some time to find their next job. Shree Rajakumari Doddamani Ashram for blind and deaf and mute, founded in 1900, houses 20 people. The Ashram doesn't provide any food to the inmates and due to lock down, they have not been able to find work. Shishukunj Bengaluru has supported them with groceries.

**Monthly Meet with Sponsored Children:** In order to get updates on things, there are monthly meetings scheduled with children pursuing higher education. They are encouraged to talk about any challenges they are facing during tough times at home or college. Based on their problems, appropriate facilities are made or provided wherever required. Children are actively asked to scout for children who might need help with education where many parents have lost jobs and are unable to continue to pay for their education.

**Helping COVID Affected Patients:** A person reached out to Soundaryaben from Pune, seeking help for a patient in Manipal Hospital, Bengaluru. There was no attendant with the patient as her husband was in other hospital and two small children were with her parents in Tamil Nadu. Soundaryaben, in turn, reached out to Manish bhai, an ex-student of Shishukunj Vidyalaya. He was brave enough to accept this challenge during the peak of COVID second wave, to deliver necessary items to the COVID patient by cycle.

**Wall Painting:** The children assisted BGMS ashram with painting the newly built walls and dividers on their request. They painted for 3 days straight and the concept was thought provoking.

**Creating Content on YouTube:** Weekly videos are posted on the [YouTube channel](#), which covers inspirational stories, career options, interviews, soft skills, etc.



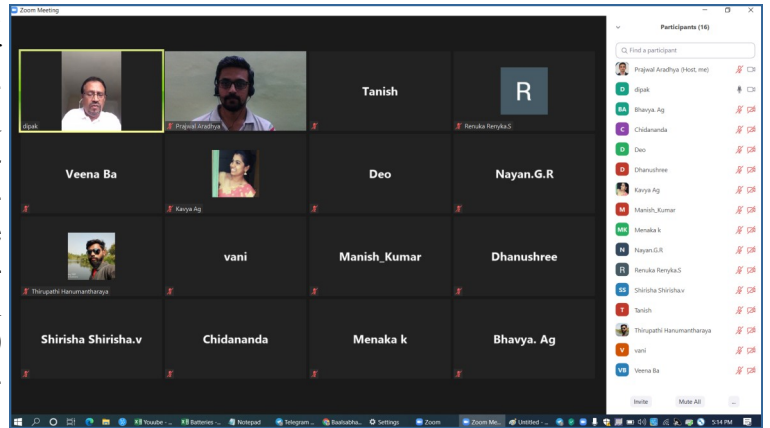
Online Baal Sabha



Grocery Distribution



**COVID Relief Fund Form Submission:** The Govt. of Karnataka has announced COVID Relief fund for over 11 unorganized sector workers across Karnataka. Due to COVID, the form has to be submitted digitally via government website. Shishukunj *karyakars* decided to step in and help the workers to receive their entitled amount. Since most of these workers are not digitally literate, the *karyakars* decided to collect necessary details and submit the form on their behalf. They had set a target to help 100 workers, which will equate to little over 2.2 lakh rupees of monetary benefit to workers.



*Online Meeting with Sponsored Children*

*(An Extract From Old SETU May-July 1988)*

## A Sloppy Home can ruin a Child by Okechi-Kendo

What children read and see is not going to do them nearly as much harm as what they experience in the family. We have heard the phrase: like father like son. But one-can add: like mother like daughter.

One does not need to go to fiction to find out the harm adults do to children. Family scenes provide raw experience, ready examples of bad and good that go into influencing the child. One is often struck by the similarity between the father and the son. In a family where the father is the unchallenged boss, shouting orders, issuing abuses, warnings and exuding all manner of authority over the child, the mother and anybody else, the child will grow to think that their “dad” is the ideal image of a manly father, the tyrant of his small family empire.

Little surprise, that you will hear such children abusing each other, and shouting obscenities at their younger siblings and even at adults in extreme cases. In a sense, they are replaying scenes between the father and the mother. The parents will have already adversely influenced the mentality of their children.

If the father is the male chauvinist type and the mother like nagging type, the children will already have had very negative models.

Similarly if the father is the chain-smoking type on whose table permanently sits a dusty ashtray, the son begins by rolling dry leaves inside papers, an innocent beginning which sooner or later becomes a devastating habit. Drug abuse among children first begins as fun, then addiction.

In certain families, the mother will be quick to liken the son to the father (A rat begets a rat). Or if the father drinks, the child begins by taking sips from the father’s bottle. As soon as he gets some money, (he may steal from the parents) he begins by paying periodic visits to bars in the neighborhood. But if he is too young to sit in a bar, he will buy a bottle and retire to a safe corner to drink the stuff that rarely discusses on friendly terms, their children will follow suit.

The mother is rarely innocent. She also has daughter to shape. Children learn by imitation. They copy adults. If the parents are the brooding types, the fighting type, or a couple. It would be pointless in this regard to blame society’s short comings on the invasion of electronic media (video, radio, television and music). It is a question of first things first. Parents need clearance before they blame a third party.

Think of the harm adults do to children. It is this oppressive family environment that damages the child’s innocence. One is led to question what can be more harmful to the child than negative family precedents.

**Dhrangadhra:** (E: [admin@shishukunj.net](mailto:admin@shishukunj.net))

Shishukunj School, Dhrangadhra is closed because of the pandemic. Teachers and students have now gotten used to with virtual presence and learning through digital spaces. Apart from online classes, the school has organized various online sessions.

Teachers celebrated International Yoga day on campus. They are also conducting sessions for teachers so they can share experiences, ideas and scope of creativity in online sessions. They are praying for health and peace so that children can come back soon and the school campus feels alive again. Shishukunj Dhrangadhra also celebrated its Virtual Annual Day on 29th July 2021.



*Yoga Day Celebration*



*Staff Meeting*



*Online Classes*

**Indore:** For more details visit [www.shishukunj.in](http://www.shishukunj.in)

A workshop on art integration and learning and NEP (National Education Policy) 2020 was held in school on February 04 & 05 2021. The resource person was Mrs. Smitha Matai, a certified MyNEP ambassador and English Language trainer for the teach India programme.

The school organized two webinars for students to make them aware of various issues related to cyber ethics and cyber safety on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021.

In response to the need of students for guidance in building their profile for college admission, the school conducted a webinar on profile building for college admission in India and Abroad on June 17, 2021.

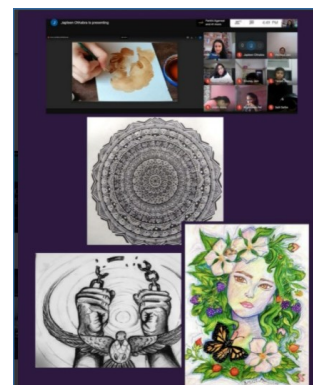
Shishukunj has always valued the importance of co-curricular activities and given every opportunity to Shishyans to participate in them for their holistic development. Shishukunj Clubs was an online student driven initiative started during the academic session 2020-21. Refusing to be deterred by the pandemic, students of classes XI and XII took up leadership positions in clubs and let the clubs to glory.



*NEP Workshop*



*Profile Building Webinar*



*Online Art Club*



**Mankuva:** Bhartiben (E: [shishukunjgujarat@gmail.com](mailto:shishukunjgujarat@gmail.com))

The team at Shishukunj Anganwadi Mankuva were already providing worksheets at home to the children. After second wave of COVID, they realized that for one more year children will not come to the campus. So they have to teach them by providing worksheets only. They have started more creative and innovative ideas of activity to include in worksheets so that it will be *gammat sathe gyan* for child and parent both.

As it is not possible to meet in person, the team has started to meet through online portals. The aim of the meetings is to share ideas and support each other to be more creative in work. Also, story telling sessions are organized once in a week for the development of teachers. They wish to learn this skill better by the time children come back to the school.



*Teachers Meeting*



*Playground being Renovated*



*Renovated Playground*

**Nilpar:** Nakulbhai Bhavsar (E: [gssnilpar@rediffmail.com](mailto:gssnilpar@rediffmail.com))

In the last academic year, all the children from Classes 1 to 8 were promoted to the next class, as no term end examinations could be conducted due to the second wave. Results were prepared by the teachers according to the 1st Term examination and various internal assessments. Staff members of Gram Swaraj Sangh carried out various other activities for the communities with support from various donors. 192 needy families of interior villages and hamlets were provided grocery kits. Health kits were distributed to different health centres in villages for the safety of healthcare workers. A health camp was also organized in the campus.

Some work was also undertaken towards environment conservation. New rainwater harvesting ponds were constructed near those hamlets where there were no drinking water sources and ground water was saline. 2100 saplings have been purchased and readied for plantation in different villages and hamlets. 200 fruit-tree saplings have been planted in the campus as a dedication to the children studying here, and the area has been aptly named *Baal Fal Van Vatika* (An Orchard for Children). Apart from that, a *Chhash Kendra* (Free Buttermilk Distribution Centre) was also functional in April & May to provide relief from scorching summer heat of the region.



*Chhash Kendra*



*Saplings for Plantation*

From the 1st week of June, the new academic year started. The teachers attended a 4 day long online training organized by the Education Department of Gujarat state for primary school teachers. The teachers also contacted parents and students via telephone or visiting personally, and explained to them to continue the education of their children in these difficult times. Queries from parents are also being addressed by the teachers. Distribution of textbooks to students was also undertaken during this time. From 15th June, online education for children has started. Teachers are in regular contact with students via Whatsapp and phone calls. From last week of July students of grades 9 and 10 have arrived on campus.

**Shishukunj International Foundation (SIF):** (E: [admin@shishukunj.net](mailto:admin@shishukunj.net)) (W: [shishukunj.net](http://shishukunj.net))

SIF has been coordinating and supporting Shishukunj Centres and affiliated organisation on a regular basis as per the need. SIF team worked with Shishukunj London to collect and provide information from different centres under Shishukunj Education Programme for the SEP Musical Evening in March. SIF also collaborated with local organizations of Kutch, Gujarat under *Kutch Karuna Abhiyan* which aimed at providing tale medicine and other support to those in need during the second wave of COVID. SIF supported Baal Kelavni Mandir Bagasara in their relief work after the cyclone Tauktae by distributing tarpaulin sheets and construction material. Support was also provided to families in coastal areas of Saurashtra.

SIF organised two *Vichar Vartul* sessions where in like minded people from various schools and organizations come together on a single platform and have open thought provoking discussions centered around different themes.

The skill development classes at SIF office campus in Bhuj were halted for a month during the second wave of COVID. However the classes have now resumed and functioning regularly. SIF has initiated tailoring classes in Ansodar village, Amreli from June 2021 for the benefit of young girls and women of the village.



*Kutch Karuna Abhiyan– Awareness Banner*



*Tarpaulin Distribution*



*Tailoring Classes at Ansodar*

## An interesting article from SETU 1986

### Value of Action

Man must keep pace with the advancing times if he is to survive in the struggle for existence. India needs to make particular note of this. Mere acquisition of knowledge will not suffice. Knowledge is related to the past. It has to be translated currently into action. “Men of mere ideas and no legs are no more than intellectual centipedes”. Thoughts and ideas must be accomplished into deeds. If not they purify and poison the mind and man. An American Humorist upholds the cause of action in simple rhyme:

I’ve thought and thought on men and things,  
 As my uncle used to say,  
 ‘If the folks don’t work as they pray,  
 Why, there isn’t no use to pray’.  
 If you want something and just dead set,  
 A pleading for it with both eyes wet,  
 And tears won’t bring it: why, you try sweat,  
 As my uncle used to say.

Your motto in life should be to strive, to struggle and not to succeed. Work well accomplished is the joy of life. Success or failure is immaterial to you. What really matters in life is your ability to adopt action to obligation. Krishna summarized all practical wisdom in his precious words: “*Thy business is with action only, never with reward of merit accruing from it; let not the fruit of action entangle thee, nor be thou the slave of inaction*”.

-Parthasarthy



**Shishukunj International School, Bhuj:** Tanujbhai Shah (E: [shahtanuj@hotmail.com](mailto:shahtanuj@hotmail.com)) / Sandhyaben Acharya (E: [management@sisbhuj.org](mailto:management@sisbhuj.org))

After summer vacations, the re-opening of school in June once again was a continuation of online teaching mode due to the persistence of COVID situation. The times indeed have been very eventful for team SIS. The school feels very happy to share the glimpses of a few memorable sessions happened so far, in favorable weather, with the onset of monsoon, under the Blue-Grey umbrella overhead. The school team had lots of opportunities to engage with some hands-on activities.

### ***Engagement with nature***

Teacher workshop via onsite activity was held at the river bed surrounding areas for two days. In that workshop, various terms of geology like Bedding Planes, Layering formed in Sedimentary rocks, Weathering, Contraction and fault were introduced. The team also looked at the larger system: how the flow of water not only affects the ground, but also the stones, vegetation nearby and creates a whole cycle which was shown live to everyone present there and was explained in detail. This workshop was helpful in understanding the needs and processes of land and weather cycles and how the curriculum can be designed by setting up a "Nature Classroom" for students. It was a privilege to have Shri Yogeshbhai Jadeja from Arid Communities and Technologies (ACT) as a resource.

Also a day was dedicated on "World Environment Day" to raise awareness on challenges and crises posed to the environment through the direct and indirect consequences from our actions. Plantation was done in campus with 125 new admissions in the form of plants (60 herbs and 65 shade-giving flowering and fruit trees). Some of them in Kindergarten and some in Grade 10.

### ***Shishukunj Activities with the community***

Along with the regular teaching/learning, the team could also reach the parents of EWS/ sponsored children and interact with them to strengthen the bond. Sessions are held with these children by the teachers to get personalized attention in order to overcome severe learning gaps identified during past year. Click on the link provided for further details <https://youtu.be/mprYJprdByU>

All the parents of Grade 1 to 4 were invited in small batches for an open sharing. The interaction was based on academic struggles and children's progress, moreover understanding the overall effects of the critical times on their health and home environment, leading to good bonding and assurance.



*Teachers Workshop at River Bed*



*Environment Day Celebration*

**“All power is within you; you can do anything and everything.”**

**- Swami Vivekanand**



## School Development: (E: [admin@shishukunj.net](mailto:admin@shishukunj.net))

Work at construction site of Shishukunj School has restarted after a brief gap. The main gate of the school is being reconstructed to make it a permanent gate. In the multipurpose hall, the side passages have been covered with sliding wooden doors to utilize the space as a storage area.

In the volleyball court, leveling of ground has been done. Boundary and masonry work has been completed for the same. The cricket ground has also been leveled and a viewing deck has been constructed.



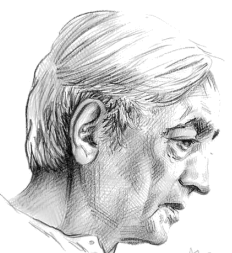
*Main Gate*



*Sliding Doors Installed*



*Viewing area of Cricket Ground*



**“...To know not only how to sail on the river, in which there isn't much danger, but also know at a certain time of life how to meet the sea with all its changes, deep currents, strong winds, terrible dangers. All that is life.”**

**- J. Krishnamurti**

## Community Outreach Programme, Bhuj: [Nazirbhai Sodha](mailto:outreach@sisbhuj.org) (E: [outreach@sisbhuj.org](mailto:outreach@sisbhuj.org))

In March 2021, children enjoyed to play with colors on the occasion of Dhuleti. In April, the centres were functioning regularly. Children were provided worksheets for working at home and they attended the centre only to collect lunch. They have celebrated World Sparrow Day and made different nests for the sparrows. Then, as the second wave of COVID was spreading swiftly, the centres had to be closed from May 2021.

From end of July 2021, centres have reopened and children are again coming to the centres for meal and for homework worksheets. As it is rainy season and best time to plant saplings, parents and children plant various saplings around the centers and community.



*Making Bird Houses*



*Tree Plantation*



*Children Taking Care of Plants*



## AUSTRALIA

**Melbourne:** Nileshbhai Morker (E: nmorker@yahoo.com) / Dineshbhai Varsani (E: varsani68@yahoo.com)

Shishukunj Melbourne had been lucky enough to have face-to-face Shishukunj where strict COVID-19 practises were abided, in order to keep the Shishukunj community safe. However, when the State Government announced lockdowns in February and June 2021, kendras were disrupted and Shishukunj Melbourne was once again, forced to continue with impromptu online kendras, pushing the *karyakar* team to create virtual excitement.

The annual Mata-Pita Poojan was fortunately done in face-to-face conditions with all the *baalako* and their parents to start off 2021. *Karyakars* were excited to see *baalako*'s enthusiasm and participation in *Hukamo* and games as well as actively joining in Bal sabha activities but strict government guidelines were followed to keep everyone safe. In April, after a short lockdown period, the over 12's attended a Talim shibir which was accommodated to uplift *baalako* to learn life skills and Shishukunj behaviours. There were team building games, *karyakar* lead activities and learning about public speaking from international Toastmaster contenders. Also, basic run-down on duties and purpose to further advance Shishukunj Melbourne as a whole.

Holi was another event that was done face-to-face to celebrate such a well-known festival. *Baalako* played games and were coloured in their enjoyment. This was followed by Mother's Day, run by over 12's and *karyakar*'s which included decorating a biscuit for their mothers or mother-figures and play games with all the mothers, where mothers were partnered with other *baalako* in outdoor activities. Taking a step forward in learning, a group of *baalako* and *karyakars* organised to teach members sign language -specifically Auslan. This was done in a simple yet memorable manner for everyone to use it outside of Shishukunj.

Another lockdown meant another online kendra *karyakars* held. In the first kendra held online, there was a fitness session themed towards the upcoming Olympic games and show and tell. This allowed for *baalako* to grab one object they'd like to talk about for a few minutes, expanding their public speaking abilities. The second online kendra, there was a Just Dance fitness session held by a fellow *talimi karyakar*. This was then followed by a scavenger hunt which encouraged *baalako* to find items in their house in a race to be the first to bring it to their designated Over 12 member.

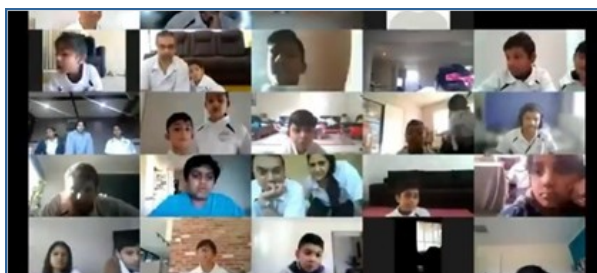
More recently, after the fourth lockdown, Shishukunj Melbourne carried forward with the face-to-face practices. Once again, members were determined to see their friends as well as learning *hukamo*, *kawayat*, *balgeets* and new games. Finally, Shishukunj Melbourne had formally formed a new committee with both *talim karyakars* and senior *karyakars*.



Holi Event



Sign language Incursion



Online Scavenger Hunt



Outdoor Mother's Day

## EUROPE

### London:

Shishukunj London has continued to provide a fantastic virtual platform for *baalako* to enjoy activities during the pandemic. Post Easter break, both Finchley and Harrow Kendras merged and became Sanyukta Kendra. The theme for this summer term was '5 Ways to Wellbeing', which aimed to discuss the importance of mental health to our *baalako* and members through the support of Mind and Heads Up. The 5 ways explored were 'Connect', 'Be Active', 'Take Notice', 'Keep Learning' and 'Give'. The Kendra teams did a fantastic job at creating weekly videos to capture these five areas, which was a great way to explain wellbeing to our *baalako*. Planned by the SHiPA team, *baalako* had the chance to get their hands dirty in the kitchen where they made trifles, pancakes and bean burgers with their parents to show their appreciation and love on Mother's day and Father's day! The brilliant summer term and Kendra year ended with their take of the Crystal Maze - the Shishu Maze! Gooches entered four challenging zones and worked together to collect crystals to exit the maze.

Additionally, Shishukunj London had their first virtual Shradhanjali which was centred around the celebration of life and creating an atmosphere of gratitude and positivity in light of the current situation faced by the world. An evening of *bhajans*, *dhoons* and *baudhiks* from *karyakars* brought the Shishukunj *parivaar* together to remember and pay tribute to those we have lost.

**Shishukunj London also had the first online Musical Extravaganza event on 28th March 2021 to raise awareness and support for the Shishukunj Education Programme (SEP). The event had a great attendance with over 800 people watching from all over the world.**

Since December 2020, the Bhavan Local Community Appeal has continued to support food banks and homeless charities through weekly collections, distributions and food parcels made by the workforce and volunteers.

Although challenging, this virtual year has been a great chance for *baalako* to continue their journey through Shishukunj and has given workforce and seniors the chance to get creative with online activities and continue to provide high quality sessions for *baalako*. As the government guidelines ease, Shishukunj London aims to welcome back *baalako* to the Kendras and provide physical activities as soon as it is safe to do so. See [shishukunj.org.uk](http://shishukunj.org.uk) for more details.



Online Kendra Activity



Food Collection and Distribution



Preparing Food Packets



## Shishukunj Affiliated/supported Centres around the World

**Chaitanya Charitable Trust, Jamnagar:** (E: [info@chaitanyatrust.org](mailto:info@chaitanyatrust.org))

We're all aware of the dire state of plastic pollution in our oceans and how plastic has become everyone's number one enemy. An Ecobrick is a reusable building block made by packing solid non-biodegradable waste into a plastic bottle to a specific density. The bottles are suitable building blocks for virtually any construction because they are packed with a set density. To spread awareness on eco-bricks, Chaitanya Charitable Trust demonstrated the making and use of eco-bricks.

In February 2021, children were taken to Ranjit Sagar dam for picnic. As a part of health awareness, 600 packets of sanitary pads were distributed to 300 ladies. During the second wave of COVID, the organisation distributed green coconuts to 2400 patients.



*Sanitary Napkin Distribution*



*Picnic at Ranjit Sagar dam*



*Eco-brick Making Demonstration*

**Dhanvantri School, Bhuj :** (E: [mvkulkarni50@rediffmail.com](mailto:mvkulkarni50@rediffmail.com)/[sardaneelamp@gmail.com](mailto:sardaneelamp@gmail.com))

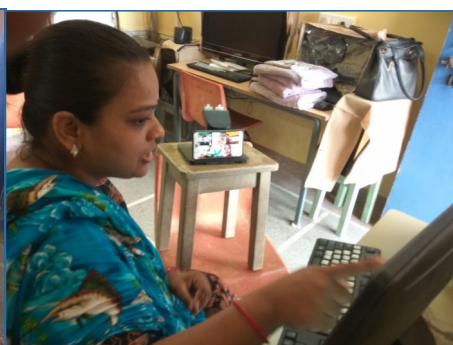
In April, as the final term of 2020-21 was to end, teachers were busy preparing results on the basis of aggregates of internal and 1st term end assessments, as final term examinations had to be cancelled due to the second wave of COVID. Results were given to the children in the last week of April and the school was closed in May for Summer Break. The school reopened from 1st week of June. The teachers spent one week to prepare materials and syllabus for the classes.

The teachers also had an opportunity to visit a CSR project by Hindustan Uniliver Co. where the company has given a project to its partner NGOs to prepare hygiene kits for distribution in villages. The NGO has in turn worked with the youth and women of the villages to stitch bags and pack the kits with hygiene products, which provides them employment.

Online classes for the new academic year have resumed from the second week of June. Teachers are conducting live classes on group video calls, along with providing activity workbooks and worksheets to children. Physiotherapy sessions in school are open for children with Cerebral Palsy, with complete safety protocols.



*Physiotherapy Sessions*



*Online Classes*



*Physiotherapy Sessions*



## Happy Faces School (Bhuj): (E: [happyfacesnurseryschool@gmail.com](mailto:happyfacesnurseryschool@gmail.com))

The new session of the academic year for Happy Faces School started from April 2021. At the end of March, students were given their results on the basis of internal assessments, assignment submission and overall performance throughout the year. Online mode of education continued, and by now all children and teachers have gotten comfortable with this medium of learning. Teachers have been very enthusiastic about the syllabus and are constantly working towards making the classes more interactive and fun for children. Children are also responding well and showing great interest in activities. Teachers are also contacting children and their parents personally in case they have any difficulties and need additional help. Regular assignments and worksheets are being shared by the school. The school had summer break in the month of May, and reopened in June. Teachers have prepared a lot of interesting materials for use in the classroom.

International Yoga Day was celebrated on 21st June 2021. With the guidance of teachers, children did various *yoga asanas* at their homes. Field visit for staff was also organized in July.



*Material Development*



*Yoga Day Celebration*



*Staff Field Visit*

## Shishukunj Residential School, Bagasara: (E: [yvmst@rediffmail.com](mailto:yvmst@rediffmail.com))

During the second wave of COVID, Bal Kelavani Mandir distributed fruits to the patients and their families. The severe cyclonic storm Tauktae lay centered over Saurashtra region in May month. In Bagasara, 50 families were evacuated to the community hall before the storm hit. That way, the families could be saved, but not their home and household. Around 200 families lost their shelter in Bagasara. The organisation helped these families to rebuild their homes and resettle in many ways. Also, distribution of tarpaulin sheets was undertaken to cover the roofs temporary.

An online seminar was organized in May on the topic - "Effect of the COVID pandemic on the minds of Children and Role of Parents". It was attended by teachers and parents. Another online seminar was organized on the occasion of World Environment Day, 5th June, and people were encouraged to plant trees by distributing saplings in surrounding villages. All the activities of centers have resumed now and children are very excited about coming back to the centres and doing different activities.



*Fruit Distribution*



*Cyclone Aftermath*



*Reconstructed Shelter*



## Shri Saheli Gramya Vikas Sansthan Vikas Trust (Bagvadar): (E: [saheligsvtrust@gmail.com](mailto:saheligsvtrust@gmail.com) )

The Second wave of COVID was very severe in Porbandar. Due to lockdown many people lost their jobs and many businesses were closed down, which was a difficult situation for many lower and middle income families. Saheli Group distributed grocery kits to 150 such families during this lockdown. To celebrate 153rd birth anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi, Saheli Group, in collaboration with many donors, distributed seasonal spices kits to 53 women.

The Organisation also helped many people to get medical facilities and oxygen during the second wave of COVID.



*Fruit Distribution*



*Grocery Distribution*



*Health Kit Distribution*

### Where Next?

We always welcome any feedback, thoughts from all readers of this newsletter – it inspires us to write the next issue knowing someone values the effort put in and supports in improving our newsletter. Your centre's activities, personal stories, photos would make the next issue more colourful and interesting to read.

Any comments, please drop us an email at “[admin@shishukunj.net](mailto:admin@shishukunj.net)”. To remain updated with activities of Shishukunj, please visit [shishukunj.net](http://shishukunj.net).



**BAAL DEVO BHAVA – LET EVERY BUD BLOOM**