

Divya Jyoti Disabled Development Society

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Newsletter Sept 2020 - January 2021

Dear Donors and Well Wishers

The following news, events and activities are presented here for the benefit of the students with mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy and multiple disabilities.

Candles sale

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the staffs continued the production of mud pot candles in different colours and designs till the completion of Deepawali (The festival of lights) celebration in the first week of November. Due to COVID-19, all the schools in Varanasi were closed so the staffs were not able to sell the candles in schools directly but managed to sell enough candles through home delivery to many friends and new customers. Even though the candle sale was not as high as previous year, the Divya Jyoti staffs with their hard work and dedication still sold good quantity of candles during the pandemic by reaching out to friends and delivering candles directly to their home. Like last year, one of the students Mohamad Raffi with cerebral palsy with the help of his friend sold candles in different places and got better income than last year.



Day Care activities during Covid times



As the schools in Varanasi have been closed, the staffs at Divya Jyoti decided not to call all the students to centre, but few parents have volunteered to send their wards namely Santos and Ajay. One more student Akhleswar is going to join us very soon. Few friends gave ordered for face masks but the demand for masks has reduced a bit because many people have stopped wearing them due to the fear of the virus going down among people in Varanasi. However, the Divya Jyoti students and staffs are following all the COVID protocols strictly and taking all the precautions to stay safe. Divya Jyoti has also received large orders for paper bags from a sweet shop nearby to be delivered on a daily basis. This order has been keeping the staff and students very busy during the pandemic. Those students who were very much affected mentally due to the lock down have adjusted to their long experience of staying at homes.



Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR) Programme

The staffs have been keeping in touch with few students with mental retardation regularly via telephonic calls but unlike normal students there are several challenges when it comes to training mentally challenged people through the online medium. Many parents do not have smart phones or laptops in their home and there is not much scope in terms of trainings to be provided online for the mentally challenged. However, the staffs have regularly kept in touch with the students and guided the parents for some home based activities like household activities, self-care, painting, drawing, cleaning the houses, washing their clothes and writing. Here the government has started vaccinating the doctors, health workers and staffs of the nutrition centres. However it will take long time to bring majority of the population under vaccination.

One of Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) child namely Alvina with severe mental retardation with spasticity had fractured her hip when her mother lifted her from the bed. When this incident was informed to Divya Jyoti, the management called Kiran centre for the help. Shrikant, the physiotherapist cum occupational therapist came and assessed the child's hip dislocation and advised the mother for consulting an orthopaedic surgeon for the x-ray and consultation. As per the Doctor's advice, the mother has purchased a hip belt and tied on the hip of her child in order to immobilise the hip and also administered continuous medication. Now Alvina is recovering well. Due to this intervention, the child's further damage of the hip was prevented. The family of child is very poor as the father is under employed. During lockdown, Divya Jyoti supported this family very often with food supplies.



Covid Relief Camp



In the month of December 2020, many parents from our Day Care and CBR came to Divya Jyoti and they were distributed food supplies with quantity sufficient for a month. The Kiran Center has sponsored this camp while Divya Jyoti organised and conducted this camp.

FCRA amended law implemented

On 29th September 2020, The Indian Government passed a new FCRA Act (Foreign Currency Regulation Act) in both the houses of parliament. It came into existence immediately on 30th Sept 2020. According to this act all the NGOs who are receiving foreign money will have to open their FCRA accounts with State Bank of India (SBI), Sansad Marg, and New Delhi. The government sent statutory instructions stating that all the NGOs cannot receive money from abroad from 30th September onward unless they have FCRA account with SBI. This created huge confusion and chaos among the NGOs as this meant that they could not receive donation from abroad unless they have account with SBI. Later on the government sent guidelines informing the NGOs that they are allowed to receive the money in the existing banks only till the end of this financial year 31st March 2021. This gives some time for the NGOs to open new FCRA account with SBI.

From Divya Jyoti side, the management has been trying to prepare all the documents needed for opening account, but there were delays by the government in preparing the standard guidelines for the SBI to implement. Just a few weeks before the announcement of FCRA law, Divya Jyoti had opened the FCRA account at HDFC bank, Laka since the existing Corporation bank is very far away from Divya Jyoti. After opening the account with HDFC bank, donors were informed to send the money. Some donors have immediately sent money in order to see whether the money will reach the bank or not. But after the FCRA law was announced suddenly, Divya Jyoti had to ask HDFC bank to return the remittances to the concerned donors.

For Divya Jyoti, all the documents as per the instruction of the government and the new FCRA Act, were prepared and submitted to the State Bank of India, the main branch at New Delhi through the local branch of SBI at Assi, Varanasi.

Republic Day celebrated

On 26th January 2021, Republic Day was held at Divya Jyoti. J S Nathan hoisted the national Flag. After saluting the National Flag, Sheela Nathan spoke on the events of how India became Republic after it got the Independence on 15th August 1947. Few students and all the staff attended the function. After a tea break, the function was over before noon.

To conclude, all the staff and students would like to thank our donor friends and well wishers who have been concerned about us and continue to support for the cause of the students with mentally challenged even during these difficult times.



JS Nathan

For Divya Jyoti