



**18th ANNUAL
REPORT**

APRIL 2022 - MARCH 2023

**Friends of
Kolkata's Elderly**

FOKE




Photo Courtesy: Margaret O Donnell

REGISTRATION NO: SO133406.

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Friends of Kolkata's Elderly **FOKE**

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from the secretary's desk

Dear Friends,
Heartiest Greetings!

The best news this year was the extension of the lease of Charunibas home for 99 years. The Mukherjee family trusted us from day one and we have not let them down. Today, as we look back, we have left far behind the derelict building we first visited in 2005. The old house has now been replaced by a well-planned and well-spaced comfortable home. Since 2020, amidst the pandemic, we started the civil works ; the children now have their own classroom, while the members can freely carry on their walks around the house, enjoying the new facilities. Thanks to the generosity of Concentrix Daksh India Private Limited.

Similarly, Bhalobasa also has a new multipurpose hall built on the extension of the residents' dormitory. We thank PC Chandra Jewellers Private Limited for giving our students the much needed space and an office for FOKE.

It gives us great pleasure to mention, that alongside the care for the elderly residents in our two homes, the quality of education has also developed rapidly in our Happy Classrooms. Mrs. Piyali Sen, a retired teacher is passionately involved in nurturing the teachers and students to the best of their abilities. She has motivated many of her ex- students to devote their time in teaching. Our students now attend various competitions, receive computer training, participate in dance, recitations, music, drawing and craft programs which help in their overall growth.

For the elderly residents we now have a pool of activities. Regular counselling and work therapy, under the supervision of staff members and children which make a difference in the lives of the residents. We are experiencing their ability and eagerness to draw, play indoor games, recite poems, dance or sing, which is adding quality to their lives. We thank our counsellors Nirmal Sarkar and Sohini Sarkar for their constant guidance and support.





Alongside the residential care and the Happy Classroom in both homes, we have extended our work in the field of education amongst the children of the brick-kiln labourers. This has been possible because of the expertise and willingness of a talented, grass-root level community organisation, Kaikala Chetana, whose experience in running Brick field education programs helped us facilitate one centre, since January 2023. The outcome of networking with Kaikala Chetana is also helping us to serve the very backward Sabar community and other backward communities with dry food, medical and other resources.

We have been blessed with the generosity of local donors and though we may not be able to mention all your names, we want you to know that you have all played a big role in bringing joy into our two home, communities and strengthening our services.

Everyone who walks into our homes, return happy and take the ownership to spread word about the works of FOKE. Individuals, who come to celebrate their special days, make the members feel loved. What attracts most is the mingling of the children and the elderly. Hence, anyone who celebrates their special days with us finds both generations under one roof.

We thank all our donors, friends and well-wishers for your constant trust. Our staff members and associates work hard and are taking this mission ahead.

We are grateful to each one of you for supporting our work and having faith in us.

God bless each one of you and all your loved ones.

SANGHITA MONDAL
SECRETARY

administrative news

The bank account in Canara bank is now our utilization account where **no direct foreign donations can be received anymore.**

Kindly update your bank transfer details for FOKE.

OUR NEW FCRA BANK ACCOUNT

With the change in the FCRA rules, all NGOs, such as FOKE, holding permission to receive foreign donation have now opened a new account at the State Bank of India in New Delhi and all future foreign donations will be received there. (Find details on the back cover page).

CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE ADDRESS

The new administrative office is now very much a part of Bhalobasa old age home. The office was inaugurated on 14 January 2023 in the presence of all committee and general members, staff and residents, followed by the AGM. The changes in all relevant official documents is in progress.



99 YEARS LEASE OF CHARUNIBAS

The existing lease of Charunibas home was until 2027. The family is satisfied with the work we did for the last 16 years in their ancestral property and thus decided to extend the lease period for 99 years at One rupee per year. We are very thankful to Dilip Mukherjee, Swapan Mukherjee, Atanu Mukherjee and their sister Chayna Chatterjee for their generosity. Our lawyer and friend Lipika Ghosh legally guided us throughout this process and the registration was finally done on 14 December 2022.

NEW RECRUIT



Monorama Majumder
Personal care giver in
Bhalobasa

infrastructural development



We are glad to share the news of building the first floor of Bhalobasa which was sponsored by PC Chandra Jewellers. This room is now used for the Happy Classroom students and other activities. The FOKE office space has also been created here. We are extremely grateful to PC Chandra Jewellers for their grant and we look forward to their future support.

Inauguration of the multipurpose room: On 28 February, we were extremely happy to welcome Mrs. Chandra and her associates to officially inaugurate the room which is dedicated in memory of Lt. Jahar Lal Chandra. We thank Mr. Asim Banerjee and Mr. Vashkar Ghosh for facilitating the funds and also for donating furniture which is of great use to us. The inauguration programme was designed with dance, music, recitation and speech by the honoured guests.



For the final work in Charunibas the last grant from Concentrix Service India Pvt. Ltd, was received in March 2023, which will be utilised to complete few outdoor constructions and renovations, installation of solar panels and solar water heater, and fire extinguisher.

Athai's Special Trip

Athai has been living in Bhalobasa since 2004. She came to us from Kolkata's Chinese community, but over the years we have not been able to identify her religious belief. On 23 April, we visited the Buddhist Temple in Tangra which Rajeshwari - our committee member gladly arranged, and based on the interactions with the nuns, we tried to identify Athai's religious background. Athai was initially very nervous to travel in the car without any of her room-mates. Later, in the monastery, she relaxed and enjoyed the attention she received from the nuns, and returned happy.



Jyostna's Trip

Jyostna who has been living with us since 2019 always wanted to visit the community where she lived and was rescued from. We finally fulfilled her desire and arranged to visit the community and people she wanted to meet. Some of her documents were preserved carefully by a shop keeper who handed them to Jyostna. Later, Jyostna finally found peace with the fact that the person who cared for her during those days on the street would not be able to shoulder her responsibility anymore. The visit made her happy and helped her to finally settle within herself.



Therapy sessions

With the intervention of Nirmal Sarkar and Sohini Sarkar we now have specific sessions with the members. Other than art / craft/ music / indoor games there was a day of preparing a dish of their choice, which transformed into a meaningful engagement.

The students and teachers plan activities and spend time accordingly with the residents .





BASANTI MUKHERJEE

Basanti passed away on 1 October 2022.

Basanti only lived with us for 6 months after being referred from Belehata Urban home night shelter. She was a person who always lived in a world of fantasy and thought she was only 13 years of age. She suffered ill health and we did all we could medically as well as caring for her in Bhalobasa. She passed away in Vidyasagar hospital when all the members were out to visit the Durga Pujo pandal nearby.

*rest in
peace*

GITA HAIT

Gita Hait left us just two days after Basanti. Gita lived with us since 2014 after she was referred from Belehata ID Hospital. She had a cerebral attack and was admitted in Diamond Harbour Hospital. In the early hours of 4 October while the celebrations of Durga Puja were in full swing, she departed to the world of the angles. She was the most calm, peaceful person we ever had. Never complained about anything, and always had a pleasant presence. We miss her calm presence.





Seema Dutta & Sandhya Mondal

Seema Dutta and **Sandhya Mondal** came to live in Charunibas on 11 June 2022, from Vidyasagar State General Hospital. Both were abandoned by their families and had no one to get them discharged and take them home.

Seema is unmarried and has siblings who did not care for her when she had a stroke. She was admitted by the police to the hospital. Seema has

several issues but we are trying our best to help her.

We have located the son and daughter in law of **Sandhya Mondal**, but sadly due to their poor financial condition, they will not be able to care for her. Sandhya has now come to terms with the reality that her children will not take on her responsibility. She is witty, chatty and is insightful about life. She entertains everyone with her dance and songs, and enjoys the company of the children.



Sova Karmakar

On receiving a call from a good Samaritan, our President Sahadeb Some, rushed to rescue Sova from near Sinthee More bus stand and admitted her in Dr. Fuad Halim's Nursing Home on 3 July 2022. Upon discharge, we took her to NRS hospital for her cataract operation and came home to Bhalobasa on 25 July 2022. The second cataract operation was carried out in Bangur hospital. Sova walks with the help of a walker and has settled down with us in Bhalobasa.

Bhabani Bhattacharjee

Bhabani Bhattacharjee was identified with maggots on her head near Dum Dum railway station, by the members of a NGO - Baranagar Petals. The wound pained her beyond words. With the support of the local Police Bhabani was rushed to RG Kar Hospital, where, under a tree, she was treated by a very kind doctor. As there was no bed available she found herself on the street. For the next 7 days Bhabani's dressing was continued by the members of Baranagar Petals on the roadside. However, with the help of the police, news media and a few compassionate people, Bhabani was finally, admitted in the hospital on 19 April 2022. For 3 months Bhabani's treatment was carried out with several operations and plastic surgeries, which were monitored closely by Baranagar Petals. Finally, on 25 July, after



discharge, Bhabani was welcomed to Bhalobasa. The members of 'Petals' invested a lot of time, love and energy in this journey with Bhabani. For 27 years the street was her home and we feel blessed to have provided a safe home to Bhabani in Bhalobasa. She is psychotic and is under treatment.

Annapurna Bhattacharya

Annapurna was identified by a regular commuter at Ballygaunge Railway platform. Upon receiving the message, we rescued her the very next day, on 20 Sept 2022. After a long period of treatment (she had malaria and dengue) she finally came home to Bhalobasa on 28 Oct 2022. Annapurna has no vision due to cataract and damaged nerves. On 30 November she had her cataract operation. Annapurna is a very alert and socially conscious person, but she suffers from psychosis and schizophrenia.





Kalpana Das

On 24 November Kalpana was rescued when Nager Bazar Police called Sahadeb Some, our President. Kalpana came home to Bhalobasa on 6 December 2022 after medical treatment in Dr. Fuad Halim's Nursing Home.

She was residing in Nagerbazar bus stop for some time. People were kind to her and Kalpana, slowly made that bus stop her home. We are still not sure why she was living on the streets. Her mind wanders and, maybe, she just left home one day and didn't return. As per her psychiatric analyses, Kalpana suffers from schizophrenia and is under pharmacotherapy. She requires a lot of care due to her vulnerable condition.

Uma Mishra

On 12 November 2022, Uma came to live with us in Charunibas. She was rescued on 31 October 2018 with support from Calcutta Rescue when news about her helplessness was received by FOKE. Uma was mentally unstable and young. We initially got her admitted in Dr. Fuad Halim's Nursing Home, and, later, for further psychiatric treatment, she was shifted to one of the homes run by AVIEW. For four years Uma underwent psychiatric treatment and found stability. Dr. S. Brahma - Founder of AVIEW, requested us to provide her with a permanent home, where her medication and care could continue. She is a gentle person and good at household chores which keeps her occupied and happy. We are happy that Uma found a family in Charunibas.





Shital Sen

Before the pandemic, Shital Sen had a normal life which revolved around his only son and a small job as a tailor. However, life took a serious turn when his 34-year-old son died of Covid and his work and income as a tailor came to an end.

The shock of losing a young son and inability to get back to a job slowly displaced him from the rented house to the streets. A small ironing shop at night was his bed and the 5-rupees government meal was his daily lunch. Shital was given our contact number by someone, and he called us directly. We immediately responded and as he was in proximity to Champa Majumder – our medical coordinator, he was taken under her care, and, after a self declaration to the local police station, he came to live in Charunibas on 16 December 2022. He is a respectable person and we have engaged him in sewing, which he enjoys.

medical news

In both homes we had constant medical intervention. Majority of our members are under psychiatric treatment and therapy. Hospitalisations, general outdoor treatment, visit to doctors, take place as per requirements. Presently, we are helping Dipendranath Bhattacharya with major medical treatment for his throat cancer. Maya Adhikary had covid and was treated in I.D hospital. Sova had her cataract operation while Annapurna had vitrectomy and cataract surgery. Chameli and Kalpana also had their cataract operations. Sandhya was admitted in Diamond Harbour hospital for CVA. Khudiram and Dasumi was admitted in Hope Hospital and Bangur



hospital respectively, with respiratory problem. Smritikona was treated for lipodermato sclerosis at Institute of Tropical Medicine. We are grateful to Dr. Suchandra Brahma, Dr. Fuad Halim, Dr. Arnab Hati, Dr. Avijit Dam and Dr. Arnab Manna for their professional guidance.

outreach activities

FOKE has always tried to serve the community around the two homes. One of our most fulfilling outreach programmes is our own Happy Classroom. Our little office space in Moulali, is also used as a drop in centre for the street children.

We also network with like-minded organisations to serve the greater community. The partnership with Kaikala Chetana helps us to serve the most marginalised tribal community. Sharing resources with several NGOs not only strengthens our mutual capacities but also helps us serve in a more effective manner.

OUR ANNUAL MEDICAL CAMPS



On 2 April the doctors of Netaji Eye Hospital visited Charunibas for post operative check up of 5 of our own members and villagers who had their cataract operation. It was helpful as no one had to travel for this follow-up.

For the first time we conducted an Audio Metric test for 10 interested villagers, our residents and staff

community outreach activities

members in Charunibas on 3 December 2022. Most are not able to afford hearing aid even with the subsidized rate being offered, but they have been referred for further treatment. There is a lack of awareness and using hearing aid is not common. We thank Hearing Solutions for conducting this free camp.

EYE CHECK-UP CAMP

Like every year GKB Optical's carried out their CSR activity by way of conducting a free eye camp in Charunibas for the villagers. Following the eye check up by GKB optical on 31 January 2022 where 230 villagers were checked, the distribution of free spectacles was for 169 villagers, on 5 April 2022. We had another free camp on 23 February 2023 where 203 villagers were checked and 175 including our members / staff received free spectacles which are of very good quality. We are thankful to the associates of GKB Optical's, for continuing their services.



TRAINING FOR COMMUNITY

Mekhala Banerjee trained our parents and staff members of Bhalobasa in phenyl making. We try to provide few vocational skills so that there is a wider scope for income. Thank you Mekhala.

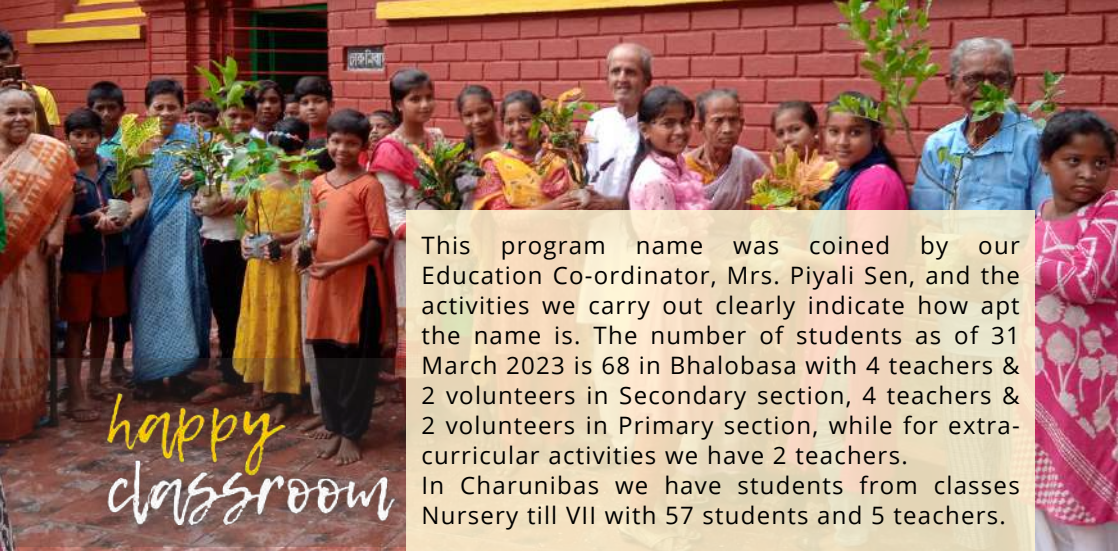
NON-RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT

A hearing aid was sponsored for **Maya Das Sharma** who lives in another old age home but was unable to afford a hearing aid. Maya Das has a new life now. **Rinky Mondal** is a young girl supported solely by her widow mother. She is living a life with a partial lung and is in need of a lifesaving injection every month. We supported her with 2 injections in May and June 2022. We sponsor the rent for **Shiela Ray** and **Manju Halder** is supported financially and with medicines as per her prescriptions.

Biswajit Dey, who was identified with a severely wounded leg and needed immediate medical care. Sahadeb Some found a house on rent and dressed his wound every day. His daughter and wife was also cared for with rations, cooking gas etc. After recovery he and his family will have another chance in life. Baranagar Petals also supported with groceries and medicines.

Education Sponsorship

We are sponsoring Suchismita Das in Loreto Day School Sealdah and she has just finished her Class X Board Exam. Anamta Ali is in Class III. Shristi Das is a Nursery student and her father Bubai Das, works in Bhalobasa.



This program name was coined by our Education Co-ordinator, Mrs. Piyali Sen, and the activities we carry out clearly indicate how apt the name is. The number of students as of 31 March 2023 is 68 in Bhalobasa with 4 teachers & 2 volunteers in Secondary section, 4 teachers & 2 volunteers in Primary section, while for extra-curricular activities we have 2 teachers. In Charunibas we have students from classes Nursery till VII with 57 students and 5 teachers.

Apart from regular teaching and learning activities and co-curricular activities like music, dance, art, elocution, games and gardening, the following initiatives were taken up:

- Workshop on pedagogy by **Eirin Lior , Mrs. Piyali Sen and Jon Ellis.**
- By-monthly evaluation of student's performance.
- Parent-teacher meetings and home visits of the students.
- Annual Art exhibition.
- Picnic, tree plantations and sit and draw competition, in collaboration with Behala Sujana in Charunibas.
- Daily activities with members by the teachers and student.
- Celebration of birthdays of the elderly residents of our homes, teachers, staff members and students.
- Celebration of different festivals and special days as - Teachers' Day, Independence Day, Friendship Day, Senior citizen's Day, Children's Day, Staff Appreciation Day were all observed with great zeal.



SPORTS DAY

Sports Day in Charunibas was held on 29 January where a bus was hired and students were escorted from Bhalobasa to participate and enjoy the green openness of Madhubati. Every child received a school bag from 41 Club 12 as a gift, after sports. The young ones of Bhalobasa had their sports in the community open space near Bhalobasa.

INAUGURATION OF THE COMPUTER CLASSES

Two new computers were donated by the members of 41 Club 12 to Bhalobasa Happy Classroom. On 7 January 2023 it was officially inaugurated by the club members. Students of classes V to X will attend the classes on weekends, for 3 hours, in batches. The classes have started from April 2023 and the remuneration of the computer teacher was kindly arranged by Mr. Michael Rao through a friend Raja Paul and his company TCP Advertising Pvt. Ltd.



SUMMER CAMP

This year's 'summer camp' was organised for students during their long vacation. They did painting, drawing, made greetings cards, wall hangings, photo frames and many more things. Their 'didas and dadus' also participated in their fun activities. Some children played indoor games with their 'didas'. The children enjoyed it so much that they wanted to continue the activities even after their school reopened. We thank Mekhala Banerjee who visited several days in May 2022, training children and members in making greeting cards, paper bags, etc. Munmun – our teacher, also trained our students and produced crafts.

Baranagar Petals organised a paper pen making training program in Bhalobasa, which was learnt with great enthusiasm.

STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN COMPETITIONS

We are glad to have encouraged our students to participate in the drawing competition that was organized by **Behala Sujan** and dance competition that was organised by **Behala Agroni Sangha**. In the dance competition, the students won the **third prize** against well-trained dance troupes. We thank our volunteer **Bipasha** for training them so well. Recitation was taught by **Mrs. Keya Basu**, our committee member; she trained the children to perform and share the stage with eminent personalities, on **International Mother Language Day**. In light of their background, such exposure was very good for building their self-confidence.



STUDENTS' SHORT STAY

3 students namely Rakhi Barang, Rubina Khatun and Simran Parveen, all studying in Class X, lived in Bhalobasa for their daily studies during the summer vacation. Their parents are toiling hard to earn their living hence this support helped them to carry on their daily studies. In return, they helped the elderly members in whatever way possible.

The teachers conducted special classes in the mornings. This was a win-win situation for everyone involved, as our aim is to guide the children in caring for the elderly and becoming responsible citizens.



EXHIBITION CUM SALE

Both centres of Happy Classroom exhibited handmade craft by students, teachers and elderly residents. Visitors and guests encouraged us as this was our very first effort. We also provided a stall to Sipra, a physically challenged young girl to sell her own hand made jewellery.



HOME VISITS

Visiting the families of our students from time to time helps us to measure their difficulties, which in turn helps us to deal with crises of any sort regarding our students. It helps the teachers understand the background of the students and approach them accordingly. These visits are an integral part of our programme.

SPECIAL INVITATION

State Bank of India, Diamond Harbour branch, invited our members and Happy Classroom staff at the SBI Ladies Club annual gathering where we were gifted a water filter for use in Charunibas. **Sangita Bayen** - our teacher, made us proud by presenting the works of FOKE. **Hashikhushi** and **Ganesh dadu** stole the limelight and returned home very happy.



valued partnership

WE HAVE PARTNERED WITH A LOCAL NGO, KAIKALA CHETANA, AT KAIKALA VILLAGE UNDER HARIPAL IN HOOGLY DISTRICT, FOR THE FOLLOWING 3 OUTREACH PROGRAMMES:



SUPPORT TO THE DISTRESSED RURAL ELDERLY

This programme started in August 2021 for the marginalized 'Sabar' tribal community and some other backward classes. 42 elderly persons receive monthly ration along with occasional medical support and clothes. They received additional food and new clothes during Durga Puja and Christmas along with blankets during the winter.

Medical support: Bijoli Sabar, who is an acute neurological patient, received special medical support and she is now better. We provided medical support to Bharati Sabar who fell ill several times. Orthopedically challenged Tarak Sabar received a pair of crutch.

One main feature of this program is its flexibility which allows the local organisers to take the final decision on the selection of beneficiaries and the type of support the beneficiaries need most and deliver it.

BRICK KILN EDUCATION PROJECT

We have set up an education centre at the BMBS brick kiln for children of the Hindi-speaking migrant labourers. Since 6th January, 2023 the centre started with 44 enrolled children and two experienced female teachers. The Center attracted the children and their parents and the number of enrolled children increased to 67. The Project is extremely important given that these children

are otherwise denied any access to education during the period the families stay and work in the brick kiln. The Center works on 4 days a week from Tuesday to Friday for roughly 2-3 hours a day and the children mainly learn through play and activities. They learn academics as well as extra-curricular activities.

Along with education, we provide some nutritional food to the children on each working day. We started with a cost of Rs.3/- per child which within few days increased to Rs. 10/- per child as our friends and well wishers came forward to support the cause. It means that the children, who are in need of nutritional support, receive the same while they are with us.

A medical camp was organized in the brick kiln on 23rd January, 2023. On this day the committee member of FOKE visited to spend the day with all. Well wishers of FOKE like Mrs. Mahesweta Chakraborty provided slippers to the children and for many it was their first experience of footwear. Ms. Rajni Dhanuka and Shri Dibyendu Baidya sponsored sumptuous food to the children in celebration of their special days.



The partnership for this program started from January, 2023 and under this program, more than 500 'Sabar' children receive supplementary stimulating education through 8 centers within a 15 km radius area based at Kaikala village. In addition to providing education, such special programs as health check up, environmental program and special feeding of the children are also organised. FOKE is sponsoring these education centres and if funds permit, we will continue to support knowing how fruitful it is for their development.

Networking with NGOs in and around West Bengal.



Baranagar Petals was supported with nutritious item (soya chunks) for distribution to 125 children in RBC brickfield - Madhyamgram during the Medical camp programme which they conducted on 20.11.22. They often support Vivekananda Bhaban - Ashoknagar, which shelters homeless people. We joined their endeavor and sponsored the winter item (body lotion) for 36 residents of the home, many of whom were once homeless and are aged. We also supported them with 50 blankets for distributing in the RBC brick-filed.

Bosepukur Tahader Katha is working for the betterment of the Shabar Tribes, aiming to improve the quality of their daily life. The area of operation is Sasangdih village of Barabazar block in Purulia District. FOKE provided basic health and hygiene items for the children who attend the education centre there.



On 11 February the elderly residents of Notun Ghar run by **Kestopur Jagorani**, visited Charunibas. We organized music, dance sports and lunch and gave them a small gift each. In the evening they visited Bhalobasa, and in both homes they were entertained by the children with dance and music. As return gift we received loads of teaching learning materials and a music system with microphone for Charunibas, which is of great use.

Networking with NGOs in and around West Bengal.



Behala Sujan organised the tree plantation day in Charunibas where the students from Happy Classroom Bhalobasa also participated. It was a great day out for them as well as an opportunity to make new friends. Behala Sujan sponsored the saplings while FOKE arranged the lunch and snacks.

Four other males were rescued and placed in **Apna Ghar Ashram** by Sahadeb Some.

Pinky Ghosh a young girl was rescued by Sahadeb Some and was placed in a home run by **AVIEW**. Thanks to Dr. Brahma for accommodating and treating her to recover.

Rangamala Memorial Development Initiative organised a cultural programme in celebration of International Language Day. Students of Happy Classroom Charunibas and local government school students participated in art, elocution and extempore. Prizes were handed by our senior residents and enjoyed by all.





After a span of 2 and half years, due to Covid and construction work in both homes, finally on November 8, we celebrated the staff appreciation day at S.K. Gardens, a beautiful venue not far from Bhalobasha. New staff members were introduced to all. We started the day with a breakfast then an interesting presentation by Nirmal and Sohini Sarkar, our visiting psychologists. They spoke about the ingredients that make up a balanced lifestyle. After a quick snack and tea we moved on to the noisiest part of the day, the games. We played pick up cups, throw rings around prizes, a tug of war and lastly the three legged race. It was a combination of athleticism rivalry and fun, with appropriate results. A lunch of vegetarian dishes, fish, mutton, chutney and ice cream was served at tables in the shade, beside the swimming pool. After lunch Michael presented a special award to Sridam in appreciation for his dedication to FOKE over many years. Sridam in return made a lovely, heartfelt speech. There was a prize giving ceremony and a gift for each staff member sponsored by Kerry. At evening time we all went home happy but tired.



MUSICAL EVENINGS

On 20 August – **TRITAAL**, a musical band celebrated the birthday of their group with cake cutting, music and lots of fun with the members, children and staff in Bhalobasa.

ABOHOBIKAR – a musical group nurtured by our friend, Subhankar Mukherjee performed for all in Bhalobasa on 22 January. The extra attraction was the presence of RJ Arvind – our dear friend, who anchored the programme with love, laughter and fun. Members, children parents danced with the music and enjoyed every moment. Both the programmes were magical and brought much joy to all.





volunteering experience

KERRY LUXTON

KERRY LUXTON After break of two and half years due to the pandemic I returned to Kolkata and FOKE in October 2022. Amongst the members were new faces, old faces and sadly, missing faces. Some of my time was spent visiting the homes and it was a joy to spend time in both. I helped serve the meals to members and met the children who came to the follow-up schools at the end of each day. I helped with administrative tasks in the office and in the afternoon's local street dwelling kids would come to visit to complete homework, do colouring in or just to say hello, perhaps the chocolates or biscuits on offer were an incentive. I love seeing the kids each year, to watch their growth both physically and as characters. Some appear very smart and I hope that they have opportunities in the future to develop and further their education. The rewards of volunteering at FOKE are enormous. There is scope to contribute in whatever way you wish. You are assured of a welcome, as I was. I'm already looking forward to my next visit.

KEYA BASU

"I give recitation lessons to the kids at Bhalobasa twice a month. I am absolutely delighted to be able to provide this service. It gives me immense pleasure to see the dedication that these kids have towards learning. I enjoy the time I spend with them and am really impressed to see their interest and quick progress. It shows that all children can learn equally if equal opportunity is provided."

RAJARSHI BANERJEE

"You have to experience it to know it. First you hit a hard reality that not everyone is so fortunate to have the things which we call basics. Then you feel proud to be able to do something for them. It's amazing how the stressful work which I do for my own living turns into joy when I do it for FOKE."

EIRIN LIOR

The happy feeling of homecoming. It was really wonderful coming back to Bhalobasa and Charunibas for the first time after the lockdowns ended. Being welcomed with open arms by both staff and many of the members, old and new, made me feel like coming home.



A lot of my time was spent socializing and talking to the members, especially in the mornings and around lunchtime. Some laughs were shared, some tears of past injustices or friends lost, and many stories of life and love and the different ways in which our lives span out.

In Charunibas, the teachers wanted English lessons so they could improve the teaching for the children. Therefore, in between their busy schedules of teaching and working at home, we met for sessions of grammar and spoken English. We made the lessons fun - following up on the idea of Happy Classroom - and it was exciting to see that they became more confident and could express themselves a bit more freely in English, even though we only had a few days together.



In addition, a very gifted girl student Afreen, came to discuss an English poem with me. I have met many good students over the years, but she truly amazed me by her understanding, eagerness and intelligence. There are many children like her, who never get the chance of proving themselves due to the unfortunate financial circumstances of their families. Let us hope that she and many others can use the tutoring in both homes in addition to their regular school as a starting point for a good education, and later find interesting jobs to make our India a better place for everybody. It is definitely possible!

Lastly, I am as always deeply impressed by the quality of care, compassion and commitment of the staff. They go to great lengths to make sure each individual member can settle in and find a safe, caring home.



GNM STUDENTS OF CALCUTTA NURSING TRAINING INSTITUTE

Twenty-six third-year GNM Students of Calcutta Nursing Training Institute under a 'Rural Community Exposure visit' in CINI Chetana Resource Centre, visited Bhalobasa on 27 April, 2022 as part of their course curriculum. The students received an orientation on our structure and staffing pattern, observed the services provided, assessed their health status (checked medical files/ mental health files) and later presented to our staff and members a health talk with practical aids made by the students.

There was an added sharing with the group by the Secretary to make the students aware of the realities of the geriatric population in our country, especially those who are destitute. Most students present were exposed for the first time to experience such free home and condition of elderly. There was time allotted to mingle with the elderly members, and both groups enjoyed. Hopefully the students were enriched and the exposure will help them in future.

NURSING STUDENTS OF NRS MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL

Clinical experience exposure for five M. Sc final-year nursing students of Government - NRS Medical College & Hospital, was conducted on 20 and 24 May 2022. Their main objective was to learn about the process of geriatric care being offered in the home as well as our set-up facilities and organizational structure. The nurses also conducted a class on hyper-tension, geriatric care, health/hygiene for the students and some parents of Happy Classroom.



Valued donations

DONATION OF ASSETS

We thank the following groups/ individual for the donation of useful assets: Kestopur Jagorani for donating 12 good quality chairs for our members; Swarajit Roy donated two unit of fire extinguisher; Bandana Dutta for gifting a special bed for physiotherapy; Mahesweta Chakraborty gifted 10 light & 10 fans for the multipurpose hall; WAVE gave a ceiling fan; Dishari Mahila Samity got us an iron shelf. PC Chandra donated sofas and storage fittings; Mautusi Mitra donated a nearly new automatic washing machine, a bed and very good quality crockery; Baranagar Petals and Inner Wheel Club of Calcutta donated walkers; Manabendra Bhowmik – bluetooth and music box; Kailash Ahuja donated a reusable table, cabinet and a walker; Sunny Mukherjee donated his smart television for the new room in Bhaobasa. Joy Dutt personally made 2 computer tables and a hoier lift for our use.

MEMORY DONATION

Debosmita Mukherjee, Laeticia Gomes, Ananya Dasgupta, Prabir Nath, Ratna Bagchi, Champa Majumder, Sushanto Adhikary, Sudeshna Mukherjee, Adrija Ghosh, Chandan Roy, Jolly Gomes, Chandana Das, Shaymali Ghosh, Rajni Dhanuka, Sushanto Adhikary, Sipra Das, Snigdha Roy & Uma Manna, Sudip Mondal, Soma Bose, Soma Ghosh, Atanu Mukherjee, Pratima Saha, Urmimala Sinha, Keya Basu, Ruma Biswas and Rinku Banerjee all remembered their loved ones by sponsoring lunches or bringing gifts for all in the homes.

Surya Sultana, Rajarshi and Gargi, Anita Bhuiya, Nibedita Ghosh, Monoj Basu, Dr. B Sarkar, Mousumi Chatterjee, Shymoli Ghosh, Subho Mukherjee, Jhumpa Ghosh, Kanu Das, Raja Das, Ritesh Sinha, Niraj Kumarcame with essentials too.

Group Visits: We received donations in kind from groups and individuals: Astha Biotech, Karur Vysya Bank, Samridhi Foundation, Eikatan Paribar, S Roy Finance, Nobo Kolorob, Amar Sahar Garia, Somnath Chatterjee & friends from WBSEDCL, Humaquest made special visits.



DONATION OF ESSENTIAL ITEMS

The students of all 6 sections of **Class VIII - Don Bosco School - Liluah**, needs special mention for collecting and donating the annual toiletries for Charunibas. It was a lovely gesture.



Mr. & Mrs Mittal of Greenply Company, sends over fresh organic vegetables in Chaunibas every now and then.

Sai Baba Sevashram & yoga is planning to network with us and start the online classes in both homes. Big jars of Horlicks and packets of milk were provided in both homes which the members and children enjoyed.



BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays were celebrated by Arin Mukherjee, Anusha Pal, Megha Banerjee, Pratul Kanti Das, Chandan Roy, Dibyandra Mitra Roy, Sreyashi Das, Nivedita Paul, Mr.& Mrs Balasaria, Shymoli Ghosh, Pratul Kanti Das, Sambita Chatterjee, Chandan Roy enjoyed celebrating their specials days.



Madhushree Dasgupta, Moly Das, Swapna Das, Debosmita Mukherjee, Baby Das, Anjan Sinha, Ranu Guha Roy, Anita S. Banerjee, Riya Neogi, Niladri Ghosh, Moutushi, Sarmistha and Pratik Sengupta celebrated their important days and made useful contribution. Biplab Mondal & Bela Barla our staff members also treated our members on their birthday.

We were happy that associates of Artroom conducted fluid art which the members thoroughly enjoyed along with sumptuous birthday lunch by Rajesh Mittal.



FESTIVALS & SPECIAL DAYS

Like all years both homes and the students of Happy Classroom celebrated red-letter days namely all National Days and birthdays of National Heroes. Festivals like Holi, Eid, Buddha Purnima, Christmas, Diwali, Durga puja and Christmas were also celebrated.

Special lunch for Durga puja was organized by **Dishari Mahila Samity**. A lunch was cooked by **Madhu Jaiswal**, friends and family in Bhalobasa. Lunch and puja garments were sponsored by **Baranagar Petals**. Mr Sujoy Ghosh and his team from **Humaquest**, provided lunch and puja garments in Charunibas.



Nirmal and Sohini Sarkar made special Christmas cake for all in both homes. The **Lady Police team of Diamond Harbour** celebrated Christmas in Charunibas while **RP Kundu** and his family celebrated in Bhalobasa. Members of **41 Club 12** came with cakes and goodies for all in Bhaloasa. **Baranagar Petals** donated Christmas goodies to members and children in Bhalobasa.



HEARTFELT THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS



Shyamal Mohanty, always comes forward to help us with various medical emergencies. Our President **Sahadeb Some** deserves special mention for always being available for any rescue work and crises management.

Mrs Piyali Sen deserves a very special acknowledgement for taking the Happy Classroom to the next phase. She is training each teacher and helping them to develop their skills and English. Regular evaluation and monitoring, involving volunteers and her ex-students and always dreaming big to enhance the education system in both centres.



Sreyoshi Banerjee, Ayush Kayal, Rishabh Pal, Saptadeepa Mahapatro, happily volunteers in remedial teaching. **Keya Basu** – our committee member is taking special interest in teaching recitation to our students.

Rajarshi Banerjee for helping us update the website from time to time. **Suparna Mondol** helped in designing this annual report.

Joy Dutt for volunteering in making the computer tables, notice board and a hoier-lift.

Raja Das and **Kanu Das** our builders of both homes, for extending support beyond their professional agenda.



After a gap of nearly 3 years, this year we were visited by **Fr. Pat Hogan, David & Helen Cusson, Margaret and Pat Finnerty** of **Calcutta Calling**; **Mags O'Donnel, Aine Macken, Norah Merriman, Margaret Jensen, Mautusi Mitra, Kerry Luxton and Dr. Sakti Das**. Each one appreciated the development FOKE made in the last two years and we are grateful for their visit and support.

Our heartfelt gratitude to **Sean Garvey**, whose presence we miss dearly; his family and friends continue their generous donation.

We keep receiving annual support from **Cobra and Mongoose, Adrienne Millar Conroy** and her school **Pabalscoil Nesain** for the cause.

Concentrix Daksh Pvt Ltd and **PC Chandra Jewellers** helped us to make the homes beautiful and comfortable.

We thank **41 Club 12, S.D Ahuja Foundation, Humaquest Pvt. Ltd, TCP Advertising Pvt. Ltd** for their regular donations which help us to pay various bills.

Gaver Chatterjee of **Concern India Foundation** keeps connecting us with the right minded people in support of our work. **Pradip Arora** donated 50 blankets.

Raju Buxani, Tilak Shankar Majumder and Swarnalata Das continue their generosity.

We are very grateful to **Calcutta Rescue** and **Hope Hospital** as they provide medicines for some of our residents.

Dr. Fuad Halim, Dr. Suchandra Brahma, Dr. Avijit Dam for advising and treating our members.

Our staff members go beyond their limits to care for the members. Thank You and God Bless all.

Committee Members

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Mrs. Kerry Luxton | Australia |
| Mr. Michael Hopkins | Ireland |
| Dr. Fuad Halim | India (Kolkata) |
| Dr. Abhijit Dam | India (Kolkata / Bokaro) |

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Mr. Sahadeb Some | PRESIDENT |
| Ms. Sanghita Mondal | SECRETARY |
| Ms. Arundhati Chaudhury | ASST SECRETARY |
| | TREASURER |
| Jhinku Banerjee | MEMBER |
| Mrs. Radhika Singh | MEMBER |
| Rajeshwari S | MEMBER |
| Keya Basu | MEMBER |

Bank details

LOCAL ACCOUNT

for donations from inside India

Bank Name: Punjab National Bank
Account Number: 0528000100106434
Account Name: Friends of Kolkatas Elderly
9 digit MICR No: 700024013
IFSC Code: PUNB0052800

FCRA ACCOUNT

for donations from outside India

Bank Name: State Bank of India
Account Number: 40106532915
IBAN: 40106532915
Account Name: Friends of Kolkata's Elderly
Branch Code: 00691
IFSC Code: SBIN0000691
SWIFT Code: SBININBB104
Address: FCRA Cell, 4th Floor, State Bank Of India, New Delhi Main Branch, 11 Sansad Marg, New Delhi 110001.

Legal documents

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|-----|----------|
| Society Registration Act XVI 1962 West Bengal | Registration | No. | SO133406 |
| Section 12 A of the IT Act 1961 | (8 Dec 2005) | | |
| 12A Unique Registration No. | DIT(E)/S-219/8E/ 276/09-10 | | |
| Tax Deduction Account No (TAN) | AAAAF0865HE20103 (till AY 2026-2027) | | |
| Permanent Account No. (PAN) | CALF01092A | | |
| Under Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act | AAAAF0865H | | |
| 1976 (FCRA) | Registration No. 147120947 | | |
| Section 80G(5)(VI) of the IIT Act 1961 | DIT(E)8E/276 /09-10 | | |
| 80G Unique Registration No. | AAAAF0865HF20101 (till AY 2026-2027) | | |
| CSR registration Number | CSR00005931 | | |

our activities



our outreach

In collaboration with Kaikala Chetana



Sabar Community Food Program

Sabar Community Education Centre



Brick-kiln Education Program for Migrant Workers



FRIENDS OF KOLKATA'S ELDERLY : FOKE BHALOBASA & REGISTERED OFFICE ADDRESS

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Kolkata 700104

CHARUNIBAS

Vill. Madhubati (on Usthi-Dostipur Road), P.O. Kankura, South 24 Paraganas- 743504

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