



  
**FOKE**

Friends of Kolkata's Elderly

**NEWSLETTER**

July - December 2024



Dear Friends,

This term the newsletter is being published extremely late. The wishes for New Year may not be appropriate but good wishes for all can be conveyed anytime during the year.

As always the blessings of the elders and the love of the young ones has been in abundance with FOKE.

We had many joyous moments for which we are grateful to all who made the children and the elders smile. Several hiccups were tackled with team effort hence all the staff deserve a **BIG THANK YOU**.

Warmest regards  
FOKE Team

# OBITUARY

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## MS DELFINA BOILA

Ms Delifina Boila, teacher of Loreto Day School Sealdah & Ex President FOKE left us for her heavenly abode on 17.09.24. A strong supporter of our work, Ms Boila supported FOKE by introducing her friends and family. We thank her for referring Mariam Benedict who is now living happily in Bhalobasa.

## DR. SAKTI DAS

Dr. Sakti Das is an inspiration. A Well Wisher of FOKE, at the age of 83, visited both homes and recommended us to Caring Hands - USA to support our work. As a doctor he often advised and expressed his concerns when Dipendranath was suffering from throat cancer. Keep blessing us Dr. Das.



## FR. SEAN SEXTON

Fr. Sean Sexton based in Ireland had great admiration for the work we do. Even in not so good health he travelled to India and visited us. His support & blessings were always there for us. During October 2023 we were very lucky to catch up with him in Ireland. It was a memorable time. We know his blessings will be with us always.



## ADMINISTRATIVE NEWS

On 19th October we had our Second General Meeting and The Annual General Meeting was held on 2nd November 2024. For the FY 2024-25 Mrs. Piyali Sen was elected as the Assistant Secretary and Mrs Soma Chanda, a teacher by profession, as a committee member.

We have submitted our Income Tax Return and Foreign Fund Return.

In Charunibas we applied for a 3-phase electric meter which is now installed and is in the name of the organisation.

## We are honoured to be recognized

On 2nd October , The 'Molly Dam' Award 2024 was conferred on FOKE by Dr. Avijit Dam, a veteran of palliative care . The award was named after his late mother and honours those providing palliation in poor settings for the most needy. It was such an honour for us! Dr. Dam visited Bhalobasa to present the award which was witnessed by our senior residents, staff, students and teachers. Thank you Dr. Dam for your respect and love for our work.





**Behala Agroni Sangha**, on the auspicious occasion of Kali Pujo, awarded FOKE with a plaque and cheque in recognition of our work over the last 20 years. We thank Mr. & Mrs Chakraborty and Raja Das of this club for recommending FOKE and for making it so special for all of our resident members and staff by organising a wonderful lunch , transport & gifts.

**Paschim Jayrampur Janaseva Pratisthan** invited our members to inaugurate their Durga pujo



## A token of appreciation

We were very happy to present a token of Appreciation to the Mukherjee bothers & sister. A photo of the four siblings was taken by Sahadeb Some, our President, on the day we signed the 99 years lease deed of Charunibas. We framed the same and our deepest appreciation was mentioned. The gift was truly loved. In both homes we now have this on display.

## To let go

Some decision are hard to take but to respect individual freedom we have to come to a decision for the good of all.



**Basanti Dhara** came to live at Bhalobasa and later, Charunibas. However Basanti was transferred to Baruipur Shelter Home where we felt she would have more freedom. Being younger than many of our residents she will have more choice of activities. We have been informed that she is happy and has settled in to her new home.

**Sova Karmakar** after living with us in both Bhalobasa and Charunibas since July 2022, finally decided to return to the area that she came from. We tried to make her understand her situation but her freedom was more important to her. We respected her decision to enjoy the independence she had living on the street. Her unhappiness and mood was affecting the staff and the other residents.





## WELCOME HOME

### **ANUSHREE DHAR**

Aged around 65 years, a widow and mother of two girls, our new member, Anushree Dhar was rescued by Hive India . On 24th November, supported by the correct documentation she came to live at Charunibas. While Anushree was slowly settling, she shared that her home is in Payradanga, Nadia. where she lived with her husband and two daughters. Her husband was suffering from substance abuse disorder, and was neglecting the family. Hence, he provided nothing for them. After the death of her husband and marriage of her two daughters she left her home and came to Kolkata, lived on the footpaths and was eventually rescued.

Now she is gradually achieving peace and happiness in her new home and is quite happy with her new friends. She is trying become engaged in family chores and activities that she likes. However she is still not mentally strong and misses her locality.



## MEDICAL NEWS

Free ECGs for all all members were conducted by **SOUND HEALTH** on 9th November in Bhalobasa and on 23rd November in Charunibas.

A Physiotherapy session was also held by the same group in Bhalobasa on 14th December.

**Dr. Pravamoy Mahato** visited for routine check ups of the members in Bhalobasa on 7th Dec.



### **Hospitalization:**

Satyabrata, Maya, Dipali and Khudiram.

### **Cataract Operation:**

Burli and Dashami.

**Dental:** Uma, Hasikhusi and Salma.



On 25th August a free health check was organised by Inner Wheel Club in collaboration with Kolkata Menopause Society where all the staff, members & few of our students' mothers were checked. They were given nutritious food packets after the checkups.

On 2nd October, after the award ceremony, Dr Dam carried out a medical check up and said that he enjoyed every moment with the residents.





## HAPPY CLASSROOM

### Exhibition of Handicraft

Helping Hand, a group of enthusiastic young men and women organised an exhibition named NUMAISH at Gallery Gold, mainly to give opportunity to budding artists. We were invited to display our handmade products created by some of our elderly residents & HC students/teachers. It was enjoyable and a learning process for all who managed the two days. We thank all our friends who came to encourage us and the organisers.



On September 13-14 Subham Hati and Souvik Das from HC-Bhalobasa, participated in a Science Exhibition at Birla Science Technological Museum. It was a good exposure for them. Both received certificates for their participation which they proudly displayed.

# Teachers Workshops & Sessions for students



## Waste Management

On 10th August a workshop on Waste Management was carried out by an organisation called **Helping Hand** for the students and Teachers of HC - Bhalobasa.

## Spoken English

On 2nd December, **Mr. Gautam Aich** who conducts courses on teaching English at the British Council spoke to our teachers. His input on pedagogy was greatly valued by attendees. The session was very interactive and enjoyable.



## Mathematics & Science

On 24th November, a session on Mathematics and Science was conducted by '**West Bengal Retired Science and Maths Teachers Association**' for students at both centres.

## Photography

**Jhinku Banerjee** - a professional photographer and Treasurer of FOKE, shared basic techniques on photography with the students. It was full of fun with lots of interaction.



# Recognition & Encouragement



**Monisha Mondol**, a student of Bhalobasa Happy Classroom was rewarded by 'Bharat Sevashram Sangha' for succeeding in her Board Examination.



**Sk. Sania** a student of Bhalobasa Happy Classroom was rewarded by a social group RAKTOKORBI, for continuing her academics. Sania is in Class IX & our support has helped her to be in the mainstream education.



**Ganga Mondol** of class v and **Monalisa Bhowmik** of class VII of Bhalobasa HC received prizes for answering all the questions correctly in a quiz contest on 'William Carey' on his birthday celebration on 18th August by the Baptist Church of South Kolkata.

**Treasures of Innocence** conducted its inaugural interactive session at Happy Classroom Bhalobasa, establishing a library to foster a love for reading, creativity, and holistic development among students. The session included 67 children and was designed to promote students' personal and academic growth through creative learning, and library management.



Avinash Srinivasan and G. Nagrag, both ex students of Mrs. Piyali Sen, gladly donated raincoats to the students of Charunibas, HC.



# OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

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## Recognition & Encouragement



Lakshmi Das & Joseph Sarkar receive monthly dry food rations.



Shanti Mondal and Rosomoy Naskar receive their monthly prescribed medicines



Manju Dey receives, monthly Rs. 500 and prescribed medicines.



Reba Nandi was supported by paying for her physiotherapy from April till October 2024. Recently she had a fall and broke her left leg. At present there is not much we can do except to support her by paying some medical bills, while Baranagar Petals continue to help her with dry food etc.

## Rescue & Rehabilitation

The man in the photo was watched for a few days, before we approached Calcutta Rescue to help us rescue him. We were able to find him a shelter in Asha Bari.

Thanks to Calcutta Rescue & Asha Bari for extending their support.



## Free Dental Camp in Charunibas Happy Classroom



A total of 120 patients were checked including our students, residents and surrounding community.



A Free dental camp was organised by the Junior Doctors of Diamond Harbour State General Hospital. The doctors in the team included Dr. Rajdeep Chakraborty, Dr. Adwitia Sukanya Bhattacharya, Dr. Pritam Gocder, and Dr. Anupam Kumar Mondal.



## Free Eye Check-up & General Health Check-up in Bhalobasa

On 3rd July - eye check-up camp by Jayatu Nigamananda Group for students, residents & staff.





## Training on Tailoring

From June to November 2024, we organised training for 21 young ladies from the community. However 6 dropped out due to various personal reasons.

The new session will begin from January 2025.

Our trainees and Shital Sen, resident of Charunibas, happily stitched 110 cloth bags for the participants of the **Kumbh Pilgrimage**. The aim was to make the pilgrimage plastic free. We thank our Committee member, Rajeshwari S, for giving us this opportunity





A brief report

# SABAR COMMUNITY PROGRAMME

Report from Somnath Chatterjee,  
Secretary Kaikala Chetana, our networking partner.



We provided support to 41 beneficiaries in 9 rural locations in and around Kaikala village in Hooghly district. While most of the beneficiaries are from 'Sabar' tribal community, some of the poorest elderly persons from other underprivileged communities also benefited from the program. The beneficiaries are provided with dry food, clothes and medical assistance. In October, the beneficiaries got special Puja ration and new clothes. In December there were special Christmas rations.

We helped Bharati Sabar, a beneficiary of Kaikala Sabar para with a quality tarpaulin to cover the damaged asbestos roof of her only room. This was provided by Baranagar Petals. We also provided new blankets to 30 beneficiaries during this winter and helped several beneficiaries with medicines.





**Durga Pujo**

## **DRY RATIONS, CLOTHES & BLANKET DISTRIBUTION**



Every year we receive saris, petticoats and blouses from the Kolkata Municipal Corporation. We share them with other organisations based in rural and city outskirts , enabling them to be received by people who need them most. This year we teamed up with Baranagar Petals, Kaikala Chetana, Bidhichndrapur Chetana, Ashar Alo and Kaipukur Night Shelter.

**Bidhichandrapur Chetana - distribution of blankets, saris, nighties & groceries.**



Saris, petticoats, blouses and nighties distributed to all who needed most, by Baranagar Petals, Kaipukur Night Shelter and Ashar Alo.





## Winter **BLANKET** DISTRIBUTION

For 22 years we have purchased blankets from **Mr. Rajesh Khanna** for distribution on the streets of Kolkata. This year he donated 80 great quality blankets which we shared with **Kaikala Chetana** and **Bidhichandrapur Chetana** who distributed them to the most deserving in their areas, all located in Hooghly and Howrah districts.

**Mr. Pradip Arora** donated 50 blankets. 40 were donated to UTTAR PARA - ANUBHUTI who distributed them amongst the TARA brickfield workers families and rest were distributed in the Sealdah / Moulali area in Kolkata.





## FESTIVALS - GIFTS



Treasures of Innocence - an organisation educating deprived girls visited with their students to spend an activity day with the members in both homes.



Donation of Durga puja garments was made by Spandan Banerjee, Suman Halder, Rittika Adhikary & her Friends, Lions Club of Calcutta Circular Femina, Diamond Harbour Lady Police Department.



# Glimpses of Durga Pujo outings





**THANK YOU**

We thank Richard Gay representing Cobra & Mongoose, Australia, for visiting our homes for the first time on 18 November 2024 We appreciate their annual donation.

### Our monthly donors for specific purposes

**DP Ahuja & Co:** Medicines

**Humaquest Pvt Ltd:** Cooking gas cylinders

**41 Club 12:** Partly towards grocery

**Nandita Bhaduri & Prosenjit Das:** Electricity bills

**Krishna Das, Robi Das & family:** rice and other grocery items donated in kind



Eirin Lior, volunteer from Norway visited us for a day in Charunibas and spent two days in Bhalobasa .



Thanks to Punit Aggarwal for sponsoring freshly cooked South Indian dinner for nearly 150 people present at Bhalobasa on the Annual Day.

### Donations from our friends abroad

**Aine Macnen & Norah Merrington:** Ireland,

**Caring Hands Foundation - USA ( Teachers salary)**

**John Mcquaid & Geraldine Cullen:** Australia

**Kerry Luxton & friends:** Australia

**Sean Garvey, family & friends:** Ireland

***We are grateful to all who celebrated their special day or made contribution during this term.***

Abheek Hossain Chatterjee
Abhijit Chatterjee
Abhijit Kumar Das
Abhiram Joshi
Aditi Sarkar
AK Siddhanta
AK Sinha
Angur Bala Mondal
Anita Halder
Ankit Nath
Anuradha Ghosh
Aparna Ganguly
Arun Manna
Arundhuti Mukherjee
Arup Kumar De
Ashim Kumar Biswas
Avinash Srinivasan
Bablee Singh
Banabihari Patra
Bhanu Mahajan
Bharat Kejriwal
Bhaskar Dey
Bhaswati Roy
Bikash Pal Chowdhury
Bipasha Bhattacharyya
Biswajit Ghosal
Bivas Basu
Boby Bose
Chaitali Bhaeri
Dalia Sen
Debapriya Syam
Debasis Dey
Debidas Bhowmicik
Dieyanjyoti Chakrabarty
Dipak Saha
Dolly Jha
DR. H.A. Sultan
DR. Pritam Ghosh
DR. Rajdeep Chakraborty
DR.Anup Kumar Mondal
G. Nagraj
Gita Biswas
Indrani Ghosh
Indukana Paul
Jaya Verma
Jishu Bose
Jyodip Saha
Jyoti Kaur

Jyoti Kumar
Jyoti Lumar
K.Biswas
K.S. Marwah
Kabita Basak
Kalpana Pradhana
Kaveri Joshi
Keya Basu
Krishna Biswas
Laxmi N Gurumurthy
Madhumita Syam
Mahesweta Chakraborty
Malabika Majumder
Malini Banerjee
Maloy Kumar Mondal
Manabendra Bhowmick
Manjima Sarkar
Manjushree Mukherjee
Mantu Shee
Mita Rani Ghosh
Mobassar Hossian
Mr & Mrs Ghosal
Momita Mukherjee
Pallab Chanak
Paramita Neogy
Partha S.Das
Piu Ghosh Chanak
Piyali Sen
Pradip Barui
Prasenjit Das
Prasenjit Chatterjee
Prodip Kumar Das
Prosenjit Mondal
Punit Aggarwal
R.Chatterjee
Raja Ghosh
Rajatsubhra Nath
Rajesh Buxani
Rajeshwari S
Rajni Dhanuka
Rama Biswas
Ritabrata Basu
Ritwick Chakraborty
Ronak Majumder
Ruma Biswas
Rittika Adhikary & Friends
Subhankar Mukherjee

S.Roy
Saheli Taluhdar
S. Das
Samar Basak
Sanjay Ghosh
Santanu Bhowmik
Saquib Ahmed
Sarbani Sinha
Savitaben Chimanlal Raivadera
Sayantosi Chakrabarty
Seema Kejriwal
Seema Shastri
Shakuntala Kejriwal
Shampa Das
Sharbari Gupta
Sharmila Samanta Sarkar
Shikha Dey
Shoumy Chakrabarty
Shreetoma Roy Mukherjee
Simly Majumder
Sipra De
Snehasis Bhattacharyya
Soma Basu
Soma Choudhury
Soma Pathak
Somlata Halder
Subhimita Das
Spandan Banerjee
Sucheta Halder
Sudip Sarkar
Sudipta Banerjee
Sudipta Chakrabarty
Sujata Majumder
Suman Halder
Sumita Basu
Supriyo Lahiri
Suprna Biswas
Susmita Bhattacharyya
Suvasis Roy
Swarnalata Das
Swati Halder
Tapan Roy
Tapas Deashi
Tumpa Bhattattacharya
Uma Manna
Urmi Banerjee

*Thank You*



## SUPPORT FROM GROUPS



Agrani Sangha Club  
Akra Jaganath Nagar Seva Kendra  
Baranagar Petals  
Behala Conference for Social Activity & Welfare Centre  
Calcutta Kanyakuly  
Dishari Mahila Kalyan Udyog  
HDFC ERGO  
Inner Wheel Club Of Tollygunge  
Ichha Puran Society  
Kamina Social Welfare Society  
Lions Club of Calcutta Circular Femina  
Ladies Forum  
R.N. Sir Memorial Student Group  
Ramchandrapur Lolark Social Welfare Foundation  
South City International School  
Sri Satya Sai Seva Organisation  
Saradasharanam Foundation  
Shanti Sangha Club  
Sarada Devi Seva Kendra  
Sound Health  
Treasures Of Innocence  
Touching Lives  
United S 45 Passenger's Association  
West Bengal Retired Science & Maths Teachers Association



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