



**Friends Society**  
(Established 1969)

## **ANNUAL REPORT: 22-23**

(July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023)



Petit Library, Opp. Parsi Agiyari; Fatehgunj, Vadodara 390002, India  
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Registered Under Society Registration Act 1860 - Reg. No. Guj/351/Vadodara  
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## THE ACTIVITY YEAR (2022-23) AT A GLANCE

Friends Society has been making a significant **difference in the lives of hundreds of people every year** since last 54 years – for those who attend our activities (beneficiaries) as well as volunteers who conduct these activities.

### SCOPE and IMPACT of our work (activities)

- **443 beneficiaries** benefited from regular ongoing projects (59% were patients benefiting from blood donation, 10% were persons with disabilities benefitting from support for education, medical and livelihood need, remaining were youth, women and other people in the community)
- **About 1000 needy beneficiaries** were provided with clothes under “UMANG” – clothe donation drive carried out during the year
- **31 persons with visual disability** participated in the open Gujarat Chess tournament
- **262 units of blood** were collected in various blood donation camps organized in communities and industries in Vadodara. One unit of blood helps 1.3 patients on an average. Hence we estimate that at least 340 patients in the SSG Hospital benefited from this blood collection.
- Around **50 people** from the surrounding communities used the reading room and the library that FS operates. The Petit library was open for **132 days** and the reading room for **264 days**.
- **60 volunteers**, who were mostly college students, conducted service activities and participated in various FS initiatives.
- **20** beneficiaries with visual disability were provided services of scribe for writing various exams



## ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school is conducted every Sunday, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, at the Petit Library campus since 1983. Objectives are to facilitate supplementary education, medical rehabilitation, mobility improvement, and social integration of non-institutionalized children with disabilities who live across Vadodara. They are in the age range of 10 to 25 years. Jalaram Trust, a charitable organization, provides free lunch for them. Children are brought to the campus and returned home by auto rickshaws hired by FS. Attendance at each event is around 25 to 30.

Activities started from 3rd July 22 for total 40 sundays. Music therapy, art therapy, Physio therapy sessions were conducted along with games, dance, singing etc. On an average, 19 beneficiaries took advantage of the activity who were supported by 8 FS volunteers with 3 qualified staff engaged for art therapy, music therapy and interns giving physiotherapy to beneficiaries. Volunteers helped Hasim, one of our beneficiaries, to learn about computers as he has a subject related to that in college. Progress video of Khantil and Jayesh was taken to assess how music therapy has helped them. New equipment Hand gripper and weight bands were provided to physiotherapists. Conscious efforts were taken by staff members and volunteers to provide activity sheets to all beneficiaries according to the need and intellectual level of beneficiaries throughout the sessions. Seasonal fruit is added in the diet of beneficiaries. Karan, one of our beneficiaries, got his Prosthetic leg with the help and guidance of FS. FS received toys and games from well-wishers which would improve eye and hand coordination.

Paper bag making: A deliberate step towards re-starting the vocational training was taken by the members. Volunteers taught beneficiaries how to make paper bags. The results after 2 sessions were positive as well as it was something that beneficiaries also enjoyed doing.

The most awaited day by the beneficiaries and all the members happened on 19th of March—Picnic! Went to Neejanand resort, Anand. On reaching at the venue, the beneficiaries were provided with snacks. Then, children played games like, badminton, cricket, football, and catch – catch. While, visually impaired beneficiaries had a jamming session in which volunteers and parents' also joined. After lunch, all the beneficiaries played passing the parcel. As soon as it was a bit less hot, all the interested members went into the pool. Later in the afternoon, before departing, ice cream and snacks was served.

A vote of thanks with memento was presented to the head of the Resort and to the wonderful staff members present over there.

Participated in International Dance day program organised by Narayan Sewa Sansthan. Various festivals like Diwali, Holi, and Uttarayan were celebrated at Sunday school sessions for the beneficiaries.

**Some achievements:** Like every year, this year too, Sunday school beneficiaries participated in PRERNA, a national level social event at the Faculty of Technology & Engineering, MSU, and Vadodara. They were trained for the event at Sunday school. Prize details – Tabrez Qureshi First prize in Antakshari for participants with visual disability, and Second prize in singing; Dhimant Joshi First prize in singing; Krishna Shah First prize Pot designing by mentally challenged; Nikhil Bhatt second prize in Chess tournament.

Spandan Open Talent competition: Jayendra Makwana bagged second prize in Dancing by mentally challenged participants, Fahad Shaikh bagged third prize in singing by participants with visual disability.

Khushbu Patel bagged second prize in classical singing at the event organized by All Gujarat Association for visually impaired.





## SHAURYA (“A Feat of Courage”)

### Open Vadodara Sports Meet for Children with Disability

Since the past 28 years, Friends Society has been providing a unique platform for the specially-abled children from in and around Vadodara in the field of sports. Shaurya is a flagship event of Friends Society that helps infuse the qualities of healthy competition and build confidence. The main aim of this event is to help children find their talents and discover their true potential.

This year Shaurya was held on 18th December within the premises of Rosary High School ground. Our volunteers gathered at the ground by 6 am for final preparations. Registration window opened at 8 am where attendance kits were distributed to all the 475 participants present. The event began at 9 am. Our anchors welcomed everyone, followed by a briefing about the preparations of Shaurya by the event incharge. Thereafter, our Joint Secretary gave a warm welcome to our chief guest, Ms. Garima Vyas, who delivered words of motivation to all our participants. The ceremony officially started after releasing a bunch of balloons in the air with a poster of Shaurya 2022. Simultaneously, lamp was lighted and passed to the children who ran across Ground. Games began with a green-signal from the Game Coordinator. Sixteen games were played by participants. Food was also distributed to the participants, teachers, parents, guests, and our volunteers. Prize distribution simultaneously took place. The event ended on a happy note with everyone returning with smiles and gifts. Friends Society wishes to acknowledge with



gratitude Rosary school management for allowing use of their ground, sponsors, donors who generously extended financial and material support for the event.



## ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN AND YOUTH

### **PROGRAMME FOR UNIVERSITY YOUTH (PUY)**

This program is intended to increase the knowledge and awareness of young volunteers on a variety of topics of interest to them. Volunteers come up with ideas for topics to be discussed, coordinate speakers and manage communications. This program was started in 1970.

During the year, Dr. Suneet Dabke delivered a talk on solid waste management on 31st Jan 23 which was attended by 22 members. Dr. Dabke is a Vermicomposting and Composting specialist. He owns a store named "KACHRE SEE AAZADI" where they sell Sanitary Napkins which are compostable, planting pots made up of coconut shells, diaries made from paper waste, benches (from recycled plastic) which are all season friendly and many more things. Overall, it was very interesting and interactive session where members were introduced to many environment friendly items.

Ten volunteers later visited Kachre Se Aazadi foundation activity site at Manjusar. Visited Miyawaki forest that they had developed in a place which was earlier a dump yard.



## ACTIVITIES FOR PATIENTS

### **BLOOD DONATION**

This program is aimed at collecting blood that can be used for the low-income patients at the Sayajirao General Hospital (SSG) and also aims to increase awareness about the value of donating blood, providing guidance to those who cannot donate blood due to some reason (such as low hemoglobin), and to help dispel myths about blood donation that people may have. This program was started in 1969, the year the FS was established.

During the year, blood donation camps were organized at six locations resulting into collection of 262 blood units. A few days before each camp, volunteers would canvas the people at the location of the camp, hold talks with them to educate them, and encourage them to attend. During a camp, lasting from 3 to 6 hours, volunteers coordinate with blood bank staff and the host organization, prepare the venue for blood donation, registers blood donors and provide guidance to those who could not donate blood.





## ACTIVITIES FOR FATEHGANJ COMMUNITY

### **BALWADI (“Ankur Balwadi”)**

Balwadi was started in 1982 to provide opportunities to low-income families to get their pre-school children on the right path from an early age. The children are 3 to 5 years old. The program was designed with the help of early childhood education specialists from the M.S. University. It has developed a reputation of being one of the best Balwadi in the community.

Balwadi activity was conducted from July 22 to June 23 for total 43 registered admissions. The activity was conducted for 235 days.

The activity included teaching the kids alphabet, counting 1-10, identification of colors, fruits, vegetables, tress, shapes, body parts, animals, etc. They were also explained about Indian festivals, basic personal hygiene, etc.







## **PUBLIC READING ROOM AND LIBRARY**

For more than 50 years, FS has been operating the reading room and library for the local area residents. They come to read newspapers and magazines six days a week, 3 hours every morning.

The library has about 5,000 books in three languages and on a large variety of subjects. It is open for two hours a day, three days a week; in addition, many of the 57 library members visit to exchange books.

One part-time staff member and 2 to 3 volunteers help with library transactions as well as with cataloging, organizing, and maintaining books.

During the year, get together of library members was organized with some of the members of board of trustees. Members openly exchanged their views about how library activity can be improved further and offered to volunteer to undertake improvement initiative. As a result, few of the library members with some FS volunteers undertook mammoth exercise of recording all library books, codifying them, deciding their placement, and making a computerized data of the same. Volunteers had arranged a sale of discarded old books for a nominal charge.

Public Reading Room and Library was open for 174 days. Total registered members are 57. Average attendance at the public reading room is about 8 readers.



## **SEWING AND EMBROIDERY CLASSES**

These classes are designed to provide skills to women from lower socio-economic communities – the skills and certificates which can help them increase their earning potential to supplement family incomes. In addition, various activities are aimed at their educational and social development. The beneficiaries

are 16 to 45 years old. Classes are held two hours a day for five days. Twenty-two trainees enrolled for sewing class this year and 18 trainees were given certificate on successful completion of their training. Two students have been given sewing machines.

Some allied activities:

Eighteen beneficiaries attended a demonstration cum workshop on paper bag making conducted by student from Faculty of Community Science as part of Say no to Plastic campaign.

Rajput Minakshi from SNDT MSW taught them about self-growth and development.

Introduction to Subconscious mind and powerful morning routine was the program conducted by Ms. Hetal Soni, affiliated with Rising Minds Foundation.

One day picnic was organized for all the trainees and staff of sewing class on 30th March 2022. They enjoyed it a lot as, being housewives, they seldom get opportunity to have such outings.



## **YOUTH CLUB**

Youth Club is held six days a week for two-hours at the Petit Library campus (Petit library). It provides friendly atmosphere for pre-delinquent children from surrounding low-income communities. The atmosphere is conducive to learning and fostering discipline and self-control to reduce delinquent behavior. The beneficiaries are children in the age range of 7 to 15 years.

Youth Club activity was conducted for 210 days. On an average, 17 kids participate daily, sometimes as many as 20 to 22 attend.

Two weeks long summer camp was organised. On an average 21 beneficiaries participated. The activities conducted in Summer Camp were Puppet Show, Sports Activities, Zumba, Workshops on Art and Craft, Session on Good Touch & Bad touch, & Personality Development. It also included fun activities like Treasure Hunt, Dance, and Drama. Snacks and refreshments were distributed after each activity throughout the summer camp. The aim of the summer camp was to improve the children's life by giving them a new experience, building their confidence, and developing their skills.

Typical activities in general for youth club participants include:

Entertainment/fun activities: antakshari, storytelling, singing songs, dance, garba, clay work, passing the parcel, tactile painting, & Zumba. Conducted One week art workshop by fine art students - improvement in creativity and imaginary skills of beneficiaries and also improvement in motor skills. Good response from the beneficiaries in the art workshop.



Awareness/educational sessions: team building games, interactive sessions on language barrier, education and career opportunities, chess competition, identifying objects, public speaking, made children aware about good touch and bad touch and educated them about emergency phone numbers (Child line) they can call for help during crises.

Sports: kabaddi matches, musical chair, three-legged races, cricket, 'dabba fod,' football, basketball and bowling. When proper setting or equipment are missing (such as for bowling or basketball), volunteers improvise to ensure that beneficiaries still have fun

Occasional events: Uttarayan, Republic day, Independence day, Rakshabandhan, Janmashtami, Navratri, Diwali, Christmas, preparation and participation in FS' annual event SHAURYA, picnic, etc. Volunteers also organized a movie screening of the Lion King, which was used as a tool to teach children about the importance of perseverance, teamwork, and facing challenges head-on. Volunteers also conducted sessions on self-introduction, allowing the children to practice and improve their communication skills.

A student from Museology department (Fine Arts MSU) conducted a puppet show in FS and a visit to Kamati Baug museum for the beneficiaries as a part of her dissertation programme. Through her puppet show she taught the importance of culture; she introduced the beneficiaries to a museum. She also conducted a quiz test in the museum itself.







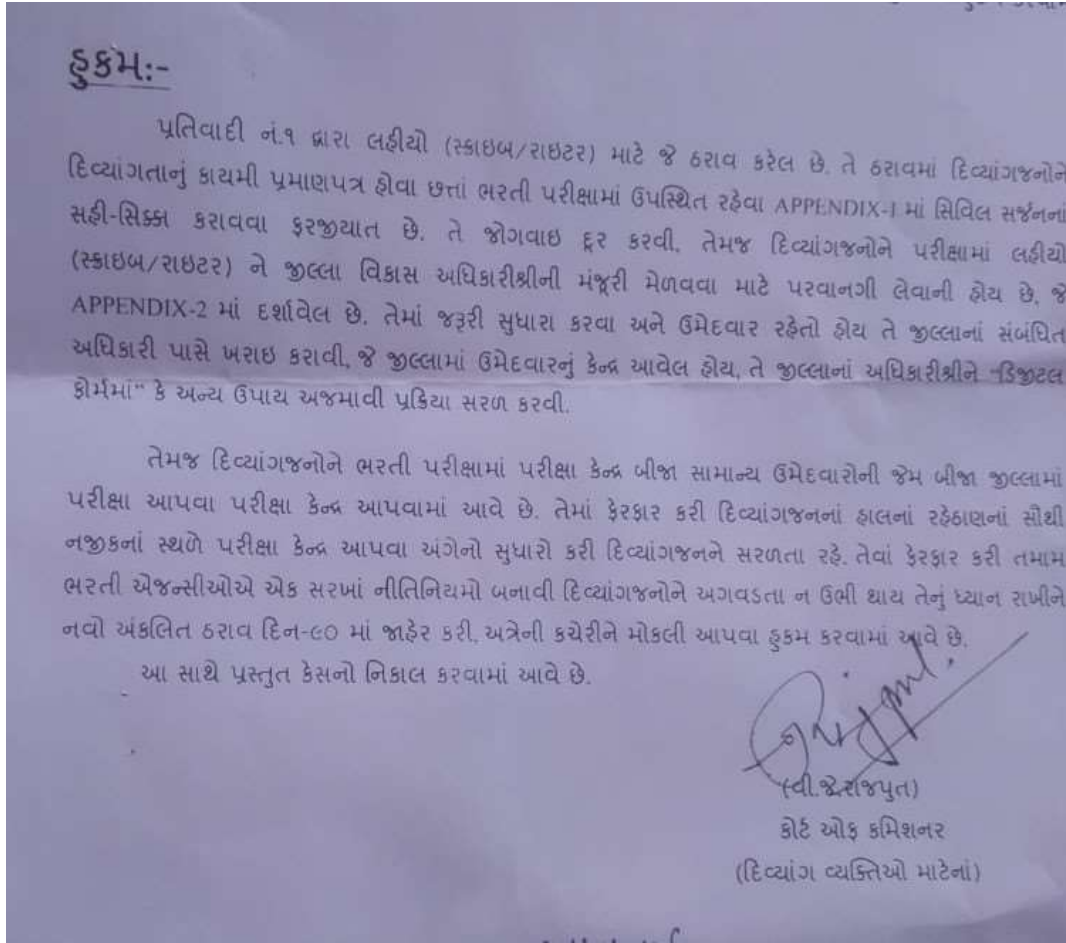
## ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

Individualized assistance, help that is not a part of group activities, was provided to adults and children with various disabilities. Key assistance activities:

### **Scribes for beneficiaries with visual disability**

One of the trustees, Ami Patel with occasional support from other FS members works dedicatedly to arrange scribes for the students and candidates with visual disability appearing in academic, competitive and employment tests and examination.

- 20 beneficiaries with visual disability were extended support of 41 writers for their various academic and competitive exams like junior Associate (Customer support and sale) at Banks, Enforcement officer, Accounts officer, TAT and B.Ed. exam, M.A. exam.
- The scribes were provided at Ahmedabad, Vadodara and other cities.
- We would like to share that these candidates with visual disability were allotted centres away from their city of residence as per prevailing rules for such exams by government. This resulted in a lot of hardship and financial burden to the candidates and scribes. Friends society along with some candidates filed the case with appropriate authority. We are pleased to share that this effort has yielded the desired result and now it is ordered that the candidates with visual disability should be allotted exam centre at the place of their residence or the nearest city. We produce below the concerned order so that the benefits can be availed by all those who are needy.



## **Educational Fee reimbursement to persons with disabilities**

Provided Educational Assistance to 3 beneficiaries with visual disability and 2 Sunday school beneficiaries under Individual assistance program

### **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

## **Independence Day Celebration**

Like every year, this year too Independence Day was celebrated at N.M. Petit Library premises. Ms. Hemali Shah, Director of HeMik Art Academy in Vadodara since 1992 was the chief guest. She is Kala Ratna award winner for best painting at national level. Her paintings featured in New York USA based calendar in 2018. She is a renowned Rangoli artist too. Beneficiaries of various FS projects performed dance and singing on the occasion.



## The Republic Day Celebration

Republic day was celebrated with the pomp and zeal throughout the length and breadth of the country. The day was also celebrated at our Petit Library campus with great enthusiasm. We all gathered at the campus at 10:00 a.m. in shades of our tricolor flag. Shri K.S.Chhabra, Managing Trustee, Anand Ashram, and our chief guest unfurled the national flag with loud cheers and salute. About 180 persons, including FS members, beneficiaries and their parents, attended the function. Beneficiaries presented dance performances and singing solo and Chorus at the event. The chief guest appreciated the activities carried out by FS and extended support from his organization Anand Ashram.





## Cloth donation drive - “UMANG”

It was carried out during the year. Cloth donation drive was aimed to provide proper and comfortable clothing to people who live in poor and unhygienic conditions. We had set up the donation boxes at FS and IMS Institute Vadodara. We collected over 3000 used/new clothes. It took 2 days for survey of needy beneficiaries, segregation and packing of clothes. We made packets of clothes according to names from the survey. And finally, on 25th and 26th march we donated them in various slums and streets to the people who are less fortunate.





## Chess Competition for persons with visual disability

It was an open chess competition organized by Friends Society for all Gujarat based participants with visual disability. There were 31 participants. This chess competition drive was aimed to provide a great opportunity for chess enthusiasts to showcase their skills and network with like-minded individuals from different parts of Gujarat. It was held at Petit Library Campus, Friends Society. All participants had brought their own braille chess boards.

There were a total of 5 rounds each of around 25 minutes which was held during the whole day. Breakfast, lunch and evening snacks were arranged by Friends Society. Shri Harihar and Himesh Bharmbhatt extended their services as arbiter on the special rules and regulations regarding the blind chess competition throughout the event.

Friends Society is thankful to all donors, individuals, Corporates for their continued support from its inception through donations in kind and cash

We welcome Shailesh Avashia and Ashok Krishnani as our new life members during the year.



## Changes in the Board of Trustees:

The board of trustees would like to place on record with gratitude contribution made by Shubhada Kanani, member of the board, for very long time. She decided to conclude her inning as Trustee of the Friends Society due to her other priorities.



She joined FS in 1979 as a student studying Foods-Nutrition in Faculty of Home Science, became active over the years as member of Blood Donation, Program for University Youth, editor of our budding newsletter INVOLVE, started a new project Child Health Care Centre and nurtured for some years as incharge. She was recipient of Friend of the Year award. In her second innings in recent years, served as trustee, vice chairperson briefly and mentor for FS activities.

We wish her good luck in all her future activities.

Board of Trustees is happy to welcome Aman Sharma as new member on the board. The youngest ever trustee until now.



Aman joined FS in 2015 during Shaurya time. Later he shouldered responsibility as Incharge-Youth Club, Treasurer and Incharge Shaurya. He has been participating in all activities of FS and guiding the current members.



## ABOUT FRIENDS SOCIETY

Friends society is Vadodara based voluntary youth organization for community service. Donations to Friends Society are exempted from Income Tax under section 80(G) 5 of Income Tax act, 1961.

FS is registered with Ministry of Corporate Affairs, India for undertaking CSR activities. The Registration number is CSR00007705.

Membership Fee: For students Rs. 50/- per annum, for non-students: Rs 200/- per annum

Membership year: July to June

Life membership Fee: Rs 2,000/-

Cheque for fees and or donations may be issued in the name of Friends Society. Please mail to Friends Society, Petit Library, Fatehgunj Main Road, Opp. Parsi Agiyari; Vadodara 390002

For online transactions, use the following information:

Name of the account: Friends Society,

Name of the bank: Bank of India, University Road Branch, Vadodara

Bank Account Number: 250510100007809,

IFSC code: BKID0002505

For such online transactions, please send us information about you and / or donor, that is listed below - by sending us an email:

[friendssociety813@gmail.com](mailto:friendssociety813@gmail.com)

- details of the transaction id
- amount
- your (or donor) name
- postal address
- mobile number
- A scan of PAN to issue the receipt and to get form 10BE issued in the name of donor for income tax deduction purposes

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