



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

NOVEMBER 2018

Daan Utsav brings joy to 2,000+ children, over 1,200 donors

This year's Daan Utsav, the tenth edition, had an additional significance to Sevalaya. It coincided with the celebration of Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary. Who better than him to exemplify the joy of giving? Sevalaya celebrated Daan Utsav, previously known as the Joy of Giving Week, in three distinct and relevant ways.

Gift Compassion

More than 350 students from prestigious private schools responded to invitation and visited Sevalaya's Kasuva campus. The visiting students and the students of Sevalaya took part in cultural events like dance and singing and then exchanged gifts.

Sevalaya has been holding Gift Compassion events for many years now. This coming together of students from different socio economic classes from different schools has proved educative, creating empathy. It creates socially aware individuals who become conscious of the struggles of children from underprivileged communities.

As expected, the visit was fruitful as many of the children were moved and promised to come frequently to the school to celebrate their special occasions with Sevalaya's students.



"We have come here for the first time. The performance given by your students was entertaining. They spoke with us very well. They are open hearted and enthusiastic. Our overall experience here was very sweet and we had a good exposure."

**S Jyothika, Std XII, Sir Sivaswami
Kalalaya Senior Secondary School**



Sevalaya Staff M Haridoss, Donor Relations Officer receiving gifts for children at Wish Tree Programme at Lionbridge Technologies

Wish Tree

During Dhan Utsav, Wish Trees were put up at IT firms such as Amazon, Cams and Wabag house. On them hung the many wishes of Sevalaya children. Ahead of Dhan Utsav, all the Sevalaya students were asked to express a wish, by writing it down along with their name and class, on cards. Their wishes were modest, ranging from chess/carom board to football and classic dance kit. Sevalaya designed wish trees filled with these chits of papers. The employees working in these large hearted organisations chose the wishes that they

what the employees spent.

Seva Crafts Stalls

Sevalaya employees also put up stalls in around 20 IT companies, displaying bakery items made by their community college students and organic vegetables from the Kasuva farm. The items were displayed to donors and prospective donors who support Sevalaya to fulfill the needs of the underprivileged children or destitute old people.

"Through *Daan Utsav*, we LTI feel privileged to partner with Sevalaya in making the dreams of needy students come true. Sevalaya plays a vital link between us and the needy."

Edwinjayaprakash M, Corporate Sustainability, LTI



Sevalaya staff R Vijayaraghavan, Donor Relations Officer receiving gifts for children at Wish Tree programme at Aspire Systems

could afford to grant. They either bought them or gave the money to buy them.

Needless to say, to these children, the value of little wishes fulfilled far exceeded

6th Community College inaugurated at Sunguvarchathiram

In an attempt at providing skill training to the underprivileged youth and school dropouts, Sevalaya opened its Community College at Sunguvarchathiram on 26th September 2018.

Full report on page 2

Joy of giving: *the way of life*

Dear Friends,

Wish you a very happy Diwali in advance! Diwali (the festival of Lights), one of the major festivals of India symbolizes the triumph of good over evil. As the festival approaches, there is a lot of celebration in the air, with people busily planning for the purchase of new clothes, sweets, savories and all the shops are flooded with new and novel varieties of clothes, sweets and of course crackers, to woo the people and make the occasion a memorable one! As donors and friends of Sevalaya (www.sevalaya.org), we are sure that you have included your extended family of Sevalaya also in the preparation of your Diwali celebrations. This extended family has 2,285 poor, destitute village children and 71 poor and destitute grandpas and grandmas. These children are getting completely free education and doing very well in studies. Many of our students who completed school education have taken up higher studies and many of them are fully supported by Sevalaya. The grandmas and grandpas as well as the residents of the Children's Home which

houses orphan and destitute children are given very good, healthy and nourishing food, proper medical attention, love and affection. We estimate at least ₹ 1,000 as the expense for one person and we need support from all of you to have a great Diwali for the 2,356 people in the Sevalaya family. We are sure that as in the previous years, we will get your support. With all your unstinting support the evils of poverty and destitution which

plagued these 2,356 residents are being successfully overcome. We invite you to join hands and help us celebrate this victory on the auspicious day of Diwali! Please do visit Sevalaya campus and join all our children and grandpas and grandmas for a grand Diwali celebration.

Thanks & Regards

Sevalaya Murali

How to make a donation

Cheques in favour of 'Sevalaya', or donations in kind like clothes, crackers, sweets etc., can be sent to our city office at

**Sevalaya 54
P S Sivaswamy Salai (North)
Mylapore
Chennai 600004**

Or money can be directly transferred to:

For Indian Donors:

**Account Name: SEVALAYA
Account No: 218601000134
Bank: ICICI BANK
Branch: Mylapore
IFSC: ICIC0002186**

Account Name: SEVALAYA

Account No: 029101000008743

Bank: INDIAN OVERSEAS BANK

Branch: Dr RK Salai Branch (EE Road)

IFSC: IOBA0000291

For Overseas Donors:

Account Name : SEVALAYA FCRA

Account No : 064993900000111

Bank : YES BANK

Branch Name: R A Puram

Swift Code : YESBINBB

IFSC : YESB0000649

6th Community college opened



P Parthasarathy, Plant Manager, K S Samuel, Head of Technology and AR Ariraj, HR Manager of PPG Asian Paints with Sevalaya Murali

It is Sevalaya's 6th Community College and the aim is to train young people for a period of 4 months and make them employable in the competitive job market.

Inaugural function was chaired by three people P Parthasarathy, Plant Manager, K S Samuel, Head of Technology and A R Ariraj, HR Manager of PPG Asian

Paints, sponsors of the Community College.

Samuel, in his brief speech appreciated Sevalaya's consistent efforts to provide skill training to Tamil Nadu's youth population. Ariraj advised the students to make use of the opportunities provided by Sevalaya, get trained, employed and improve their quality of living.

Campus embellishment

On 25th September 2018, hundreds of Tata Communications employees landed on Sevalaya's Kasuva campus with paint and brush. The volunteers did their best to beautify the campus.

On 25th and 26th September 2018, around 300 employees of Tata Communications took to scrubbing, applying primer and painting the boys' and girls' hostels. In a span of two days, they painted 28 hostels in total as part of their CSR activity.

Additionally, 150 more employees came to the campus on 29th September 2018. This time, it was to help Sevalaya's organic farmers in weeding and in other farming activities in any which way they could.



Employees from Tata Communications decorating the Hostel Walls

Gandhi 150

150th Birth Anniversary of Gandhiji across centres

Gandhiji's 150th birth anniversary was celebrated by Sevalaya in its five centers, located in Kasuva, Ambattur and Sunguvachathiram, Vadanallur and Thanjavur.

Dr Dhevanadhan Yadhav, Founder of Indian People Party (IMKMK) presided



Dr Dhevanadhan Yadhav presenting gift to staff

over as the Chief Guest in Kasuva campus. Talking about Sevalaya's contribution to the society, he said.

"Sevalaya have been fighting a lot of hurdles to provide free education for thousands of children in the past 30 years. As, at present, education is the only way ahead if we are to strive towards betterment of our nation, Sevalaya's service definitely deserves the Nobel Prize".

He also distributed prizes for the staff who had won the writing competition about the principles of Gandhiji.



Murali Srinivasan and MeeRa Maya presenting a cheque to Sevalaya

In Sunguvarchathiram, Gandhi Jayanthi was celebrated with Murali Srinivasan, Director General of Techno Products as the Chief Guest. He asked all the students of Sevalaya to work towards exploring their talents so that they can become entrepreneurs.

His wife, MeeRa Maya, Director, HR & Admin, Techno Products Development Pvt Ltd and Writer, appreciated Sevalaya's efforts in giving a helping hand to underprivileged people and donated ` 25,000 to show her support.



Sevalaya honours Dr Amudha Balakrishnan with a memento

Dr Amudha Balakrishnan, Chief Guest for the Ambattur center insisted on students learning to be disciplined and give back to society what they received from Sevalaya.



Chief guest for Vadanallur addressing the villagers

In the Vadanallur Community College, Gandhi's 150th anniversary was celebrated in which students, alumni, and villagers participated. Chief Guests for the event were A Amala, VHN (Village Head Nurse) from Katiyampandal and V Saritha, VAO from Nanjipuram.

Amala spoke about her interest in health awareness programs and expressed her wish to support Sevalaya's health camp initiatives.



Thavathiru Thiruvadikkudil Swamigal distributing prizes to winners

Gandhi – 150 was celebrated at Thanjavur Centre on 20th October 2018, in which hearing and speech impaired students also participated.

"If Gandhiji is seen as a leader, there are many differing views prevalent in society. Hence Gandhiji should be seen as the physical form of truth, honesty, righteousness" observed *Thavathiru Thiruvadikkudil Swamigal*, Chief Guest on the occasion. V Chitra, Deputy Block Development Officer, Thanjavur who was a Special Guest on the occasion offered her felicitations.

Earlier Essay competitions were held for students of 8 Government schools/ Government recognised schools and drawing competition was held for the students of school for the Speech and Hearing impaired. Prizes were distributed for the winners of the competitions by the Chief Guests.



Sevalaya staff writing exam on Gandhiji

TN government honouring Sevalaya Murali



Tenkasi S Jawahar, I.A.S. Principal Secretary, Commissioner, State Treasury and Accounts Department, honours Sevalaya Muralidharan at the skill development conference on 15th October 2018

Best Old Age Home Award from Tamilnadu government



T Chandran, Revenue Officer for Thiruvallur district presenting Best Old Age Home Award to Sevalaya Murali

Since inception, Sevalaya has worked towards ensuring that basic needs of old and destitute people are met. In a gesture to acknowledge that, Social Welfare Department of Govt of Tamil Nadu honoured Sevalaya with Best Old Age Home Award recently.

The award was received by V Muralidharan, Founder and Managing Trustee of Sevalaya during the World Elder's Day celebration that took place at R M Jain Kalyana Mandapam on 3rd October 2018.

Around 100 people from various Old Age Homes across Thiruvallur were present

during the occasion. They actively took part in cultural events like Musical Chair, Rangoli and dance and received prizes.

Revenue Officer for Thiruvallur district, T Chandran presided over the function and presented the award. Additionally, Joint Director of Health Dr Dayalan, Deputy Director of Health, Dr Krishnaraj, District Project Officer J Jayashree, and District Child Protection Officer, B Senthil were also present during the event.

In Sevalaya, more than 90 people are provided shelter and essential facilities like medical services, attendants, healthy food etc.

Concert by Dr Nithyasree Mahadevan In remembrance of Gandhiji, Bharathiyar and D K Pattammal

Sevalaya organized a fund raiser with a musical concert by Dr Nithyasree Mahadevan to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Gandhiji, 97th death anniversary of Bharathiyar and birth centenary celebration of Carnatic music legend D K Pattammal.

The event took place at Narada Gana Sabha, Mylapore on 25th September 2018.

In the event, Nithyasree, grand-daughter of Pattamal sang a few Bharathiyar songs and few others that inspired Gandhiji. Before the concert, she gave a brief speech in which, she recalled Gandhiji's visit to Kanchipuram in 1936 where he met with Pattamal.

Isaikkavi Ramanan (tamil poet and playwright) and Pujyasree Omkarananda

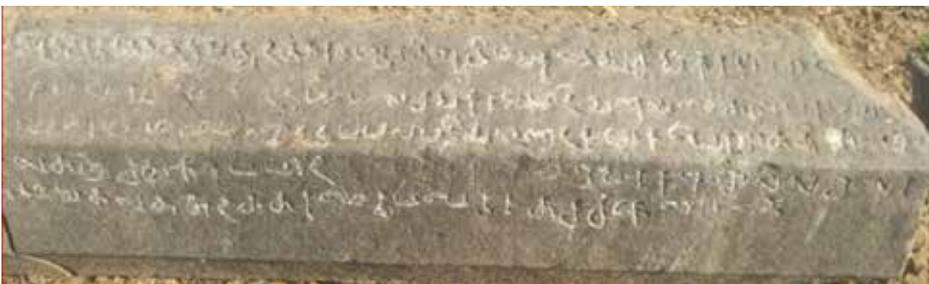


From L to R: Sevalaya Murali, Santha Lakshmi, Rajkumar Bharathi, Swami Pujyashree Omkaranandha, Isaikkavi Ramanan and Nithyasree Mahadevan

were present at the event, and spoke about how through her patriotic songs, Pattamal inspired millions of people to fight for freedom.

Rajkumar Bharathi, great grand-son of Bharathiyar was also present during the concert and sang a few lines from a Bharathiyar song.

Sevalaya finds a plaque with inscriptions of a Pallava King



What do you expect to find when you are desilting an old pond? Mud, clay and maybe some earthy matter deposited as sediments, right? That is what Sevalaya people thought they would find when they started desilting a pond at Utharamerur, as part of their rural development activity.

To everyone's surprise they discovered a plaque that was later found to have huge historical significance. Perhaps, one shouldn't be surprised, considering the pond is 2,000 years old and is located in Utharamerur. The village situated in Kancheepuram district, some 90 km from Chennai is one of the oldest villages in Tamil Nadu with history dating back to

7th century AD. It is where inscriptions proving that the village had a highly refined democracy around 7th century AD were found.

The plaque that Sevalaya found was inscribed during the times of Kamba Varman, a Pallava King most likely in 849 AD. Sridharan, Retd. Officer, State Archeology Department, Tamil Nadu helped Sevalaya in deciphering the inscriptions.

According to the plaque, during the Pallava reign, the village had excellent civic amenities and commendable administration. The pond desilting programme is sponsored by Hyundai Glovis.

From Bricklayer to Lab Technician Assistant

Viji

Nearly two decades ago, Viji was born into a poor family in a rural village in Villupuram, Tamil Nadu. She was born as the youngest child into a family of bricklayers; as a result, her chances of having a quality life were bleak.

With a very meager pay that placed the family well below the poverty line, her parents could hardly make ends meet. Feeding everyone three times a day was a distant dream to them.

Despite all this, Viji turned out to be a bright child who excelled in her school.

While fighting poverty, she managed to complete schooling with flying colors



in a government school. But, after that, her family could not support her dreams of higher education that would give her good career opportunities. She had no choice except to follow in her parents' footsteps.

That is when Sevalaya and its community college came into the picture. With timely intervention, Sevalaya's employees ensured that Viji escaped the vicious circle of poverty. On April 2018, they enrolled Viji into a year-long Lab Technician course at their campus in Kasuva village. Additionally, she has also been provided food and accommodation at their campus.

Now, as the highest scoring student in her class, 17-year-old Viji's future is already transformed. Her teachers admire the hard-work she is putting into her course and happy to see her progress. Viji dreams of getting an employment at any pathology Lab and pursuing further education in this field.

Lab Technician Assistant course sponsored by Tionale PTE Ltd.

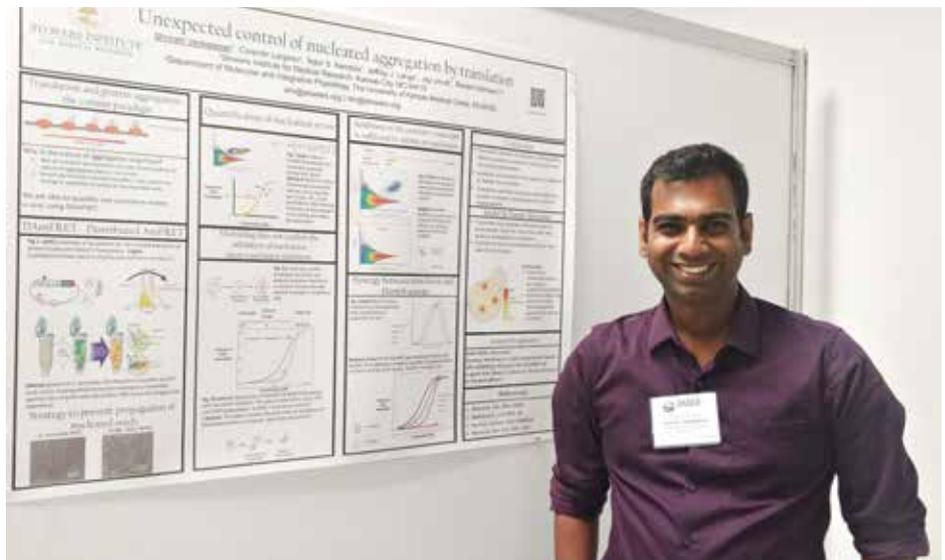
Connected with Sevalaya from Childhood

Shriram Venkatesan

Shriram Venkatesan, a Postdoctoral Research Scientist at Stowers Institute for Medical Research, USA has been a donor of Sevalaya since the tender age of 7. How did this happen?

Here is it in his own words; "I was 7, when my alma mater, National Public School, Gopalapuram received students from Sevalaya on a Gandhi Jayanthi Day and paired them with us students. Spending one full day with Kumar from Sevalaya and sharing our stories made me understand how fortunate I was.

Coming from a lower middle class family, I am an example of how providing a child with quality education can uplift the child's life. I deeply believe that education, along with good health and nurturing parents/ caretakers is sufficient for one to sculpt their own



destiny. The least that people like me who are fortunate to have a supportive family and good education could do is to financially support endeavours like Sevalaya. I deeply believe in the ripple effect of goodness and do not want to wait to do good until if and when I turn a millionaire."

Shriram says "I am well aware of my parents' struggles to make both ends meet while I was growing up. Despite that, they put me in a great school. My mom has always wished to see me as a scientist whose contributions will impact many people. I am now a scientist only

because of my parents who dreamt about my future more evocatively than I."

A former member of the Tamil Nadu under-15 cricket team, Honorary Sports Awardee of NUS, and a member of Singapore national team, Shriram is also certified cricket coach of the ICC and love coaching kids.

Shriram plans to visit Sevalaya on his next trip to India. "I want to spend some quality time with the students and elders there; and hopefully even convince some students that sky is their limit" he says.

International day of the Girl Child

Sixth International Day of the Girl Child was observed in Sevalaya's school on 11th October 2018, to create awareness about the importance of girl children.

Globally, International Day of the Girl Child has been from 2012 by United Nations on 12th October, every year, to work towards eradicating gender inequality and empowering girls and young women.

Motivational session by Alumnus Karthik

E Karthick, alumnus of Sevalaya, is now a proud employee of Saudi AL Najim International limited. He visited the school on 9th October 2018 to give a motivational speech to students from Class XI and XII.

Talking to an audience of around 270 pupils, he spoke about the importance of listening to teachers to achieve great heights in life. He also recalled his school days and advised the students to wake up early in the morning and spend a lot of time learning and preparing for exams. He spoke about the importance of controlling one's desire to watch TV until completing XII board exams.

He insisted that students must visit the school often, even after completing their studies and contribute towards Sevalaya's growth.

On this year's eve, 120 students o Sevalaya were shown videos about the gender disparity prevalent in the society and inhumane practises like female foeticide, female infanticide and child marriage. They were also taught how women play a key role in development of a society and how it would in turn lead to development of the country as a whole.



Motivational session by Alumnus

"Through his stories, he made us understand the importance of discipline. I aspire to become a best student like him. He asked us to fill all our bad habits into a cup and throw it out. His speech was very much encouraging".

L Banupriya Std XI

State level junior athletics competition



10 talented athletes from Sevalaya's school participated in the Second State Level Junior Athletics on 28th July 2018 at SDAT stadium, Thiruvallur.

Sevalaya's students won 13 medals despite competing against 1000 students from all over Tamil Nadu. V Kiruthika,

Std X performed excellently and received individual championship award in the U-17 girls category. S Aruna, District Sports Officer, headed the event and A Rajkumar, Secretary, Thiruvallur Sports Development Association, organised it. Sevalaya's Athlete programme is sponsored by Lionbridge Technologies.

Orientation programme on Child Protection Issues



Training on Child protection issues at Bengaluru

National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development organized a three days orientation programme on child protection issues for functionaries of voluntary organisations. M Mani Maran from Swami Vivekananda Boys Home represented Sevalaya in the programme that took place from 17th September to 19th September 2018. During the three days programme, participants were educated about protection of children, their rights and ground realities. At the same time, they were also taught about the laws protecting children like Juvenile Justice Act of 2015 and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act of 2012.

Around 25 representatives from voluntary organizations across south India took part in the Orientation Programme that took place at South Regional Centre of NIPCCD, Bengaluru.

The programme began with an introductory session by Dr M Bharat Kumar, Regional Director of NIPCCD and ended with a conclusionary session by Dr G Jyothi, Assistant Director of NIPCCD where the way forward was discussed.

Enriched salt for villagers



Sundar Health Salt, a micro nutrients enriched salt manufactured by Sundar Serendipity foundation was distributed free of cost to all Sevalaya students and the villagers.

Navaratri celebrations at Sevalaya



MeeRa Maya performing pooja for Goddess Saraswathi

Navaratri especially *Saraswathi Pooja* has a special significance for Sevalaya. It was during a *Saraswathi Pooja*, 46 years ago, the seed for Sevalaya germinated in the mind of a 11 year old boy. The boy happened to read a part of a Bharathi poem where the Poet had declared "Educating a poor child is the greatest of all merits." This is the foundation for Sevalaya which has been serving the rural

poor for 30 years.

A traditional *Golu* (display of dolls) was set up by the children of Sevalaya. Each class took turns every day to perform *Pooja* for the *Golu*.

Saraswathi Pooja/AyudhaPooja was celebrated at Kasuva centre of Sevalaya on 18th October 2018. The Chief Guest MeeRa Maya, Director, HR & Admin,

Techno Products Development Pvt Ltd and Writer, stressed on the values respect for people, Truthfulness and commitment. She wished the children all success in life.

The students presented a colourful cultural programme on the occasion.

MeeRa Maya performed pooja for the Saraswathi statue at Sevalaya entrance. Special pooja was also performed for all the vehicles at Sevalaya. The Vehicles all spruced up and shining were decorated with sandal paste and colourful ribbons.



Cultural programme by children



Pooja for the Saraswathi statue



Golu at Sevalaya



Pooja for vehicles

Cleanliness begins at home at the boys' hostel

Like charity, cleanliness begins at home. Understanding that, Sevalaya's boy's hostellers have taken complete responsibility for cleanliness of their hostel, which they consider their home.

There are around 100 boys and each and every one of them takes responsibility for cleaning on a rota basis. Everyday tasks are delegated using a 15-day rota, so that every resident, from the youngest who is six-year-old to the oldest who is 18 year old play their part.

From maintaining the prayer room to cleaning the dorms, the boys make sure every segment of their home is clean. They have split the work amongst



themselves and have allotted time for cleaning in the mornings and evenings. Despite all this, they don't miss out on studies, sports or other fun activities.

The commitment these boys show in taking care of their home shows how self reliant and responsible they are. Sevalaya is proud of them and rightfully so.

Ethical Religion - M K Gandhi

The Higher Law

There are some acts which are good and some which are bad. Sometimes certain bad acts may benefit us, or we may have sympathy for the wrong doer. This does not alter the fact that a certain act is bad.

Moral laws are immutable. Sometimes, in the absence of proper light on the facts, we may consider a bad act as good. But once we have information, we will understand that the act is bad. So our opinions do not change the nature of an act.

Generally men lack objectivity. Often prompted by personal considerations, people may classify an immoral act as moral. We are yet to find a disinterested student of morality, patient and painstaking, who, setting aside his earlier superstitious notions, devotes his life

to seeking only the ideal good. We may not, for a time, arrive at unanimity of opinions regarding moral laws. This does not however mean that we cannot distinguish between what is right and what is wrong. Thus, we see that in spite of individual's likes and wishes, there is a moral standard which is called moral law. This has to be obeyed. A man may protest against a State Law and choose to disobey it and accept punishment. But there is no question of protesting against the moral law, and saying it is not necessary to adhere to truth and one may lie. Even a man practicing immorality is bound to admit that what he is doing is immoral (even though he may not openly concede it).

A moral law does not change because of custom or public opinion. A moral man may continue to be moral even though

the public opinion is totally against him. Even if the State passes an act making an immoral act moral, it does not change the Divine Law. As Robert Browning said, "If ever Satan proclaimed the law of hatred and untruth in the world, even then justice, goodness and truth will continue to be divine." Thus the moral law is Supreme and Divine.

No people or individual can violate this law to the end of time. There are instances of States having been broken and destroyed due to immorality.

The mysterious moral law brings prosperity to the man who observes it; it sustains the family that obeys it; and the community that lives by it ever flourishes. Freedom, peace and happiness are the lot of the nation that lets itself be ruled by this highest law.

New library reading room



Children reading at the new library

The children trooping into the new, well lit, airy library reading room were all smiles as they sat down in the spacious benches and looked around at the beautiful paintings on the walls, the inviting display of books in the brand new

shelves, the new computer set up with a big LED screen and the podium where the library teacher was waiting to address them." From now onwards you will be coming here regularly", he said and the whole class broke into an applause.

It had been a long pending desire of the library staff. They had been seeing the difficulties children were facing in the cramped confines of the Vivekananda library which has more than 25,000 books leaving little space for sitting comfortably and reading. Also moving between the racks and picking up books of their choice was difficult. Books were taken to the classes at times to solve some of these problems. But it took away the charm of going into the library, picking up a book of your choice, smelling the very air libraries seem to have.

But thanks to the generous contribution of a well-wisher, a new library room with all amenities and lots of new attractive books has come up above the existing library. The children and staff are excited and library periods where children read, review books they have read and watch interesting videos has now become a sought after area in the campus thanks to Page Pierre Foundation.

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