

# Auro-Mira Service Society 2023-24 (First Term)





**'The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.' - Eleanor Roosevelt**



A wondrous journey, a voyage forward to reflect the joyous moment with the children. Looking back at our journey since 2008 we are happy at the thought of the memorable milestones we have reached. All our efforts revolve around the



all-round development of each student's potential in the field of physical, mental, vital, psychic and spiritual.

In the last six months we have achieved various milestones and





are still moving ahead to face the challenges in the coming session. We continuously strive to provide the seeds for the all-round development of the children. The facilitators tirelessly put their efforts to provide a proper learning environment to achieve the aim. It's also a novel experience for both the students and the teachers.

### Co-Curricular Activities

I learned that we can do anything, but we can't do everything... at least not at the same time. So think of your priorities not in terms of what activities you do, but when you do them. Timing is everything.

Dan Millman





To break the monotony of the schedule we have designed some co-curricular activities related to maths, debate, Contemporary and classical dance, music- both instrumental and vocal, language- both in Hindi and in English, painting, puzzles, art and craft, story-telling etc for the children. Every Tuesday they participate in these corners. Each of them gets a chance to participate in all the corners by rotation.



**“Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.” —Albert Einstein**

### **Programmes and Celebrations**



The preparation for the programmes starts well in advance. All children get an opportunity to showcase their talents. The vibes of different festivals rejuvenate the environment

with positive energy. The colourful clothes for different occasions add



colours to the young lives. Various festivals and ceremonies unite us to work harmoniously. Together we stand to help each other.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> April- Sri Aurobindo's arrival in Pondicherry**



Sri Aurobindo landed on the land of rishi Agastya, Pondicherry on the 4<sup>th</sup> April by the divine aadesh. To commemorate this auspicious day a special meditation was organised in the ashram. Everyone gathered at 8:30 in the morning and children offered a few devotional songs.



#### **24<sup>th</sup> April- The Mother's final arrival in Pondicherry**





The day of The Mother's final arrival in Pondicherry was celebrated.



To mark the event a special meditation was held in the ashram which was followed by the hoisting of the

Mother's flag. Children saluted the flag with a march and assembled in the meditation hall for a short meditation.

### 14<sup>th</sup> June- Raja

Raja was celebrated with lots of fervour and enthusiasm. The presence of Sulochana di added more colour to this festival. On this special occasion children were gathered to remember again the past glory of Odisha. Sulochana di depicted the stories behind the festival. Children of



Faith Group sang a few Raja songs that they had created earlier. After







the songs and a short prayer all the children wore their colourful clothes and decorated their face with colourful bindi. On the trees, swings were tied and all the children got a chance to be on the swings and waited for their turn. Everyone helped each other by pushing the swings. With their laughter the swing touched the sky. Much merry making was done and special *Pithas* (local sweetmeats) were prepared by the little hands of Gratitude and Humility Group children to mark the event. The children of Gratitude group put up an orchestra. Their flute and the *Tablas* tuned to a few raja songs.

Children recited their creative poems in the assembly and everyone enjoyed the day.

## 20<sup>th</sup> June-Ratha Yatra

There was enthusiasm and excitement in the air for a week before the festival, as the children were looking forward to this festival. The idol of the three Lords were made by Papaji (Ramesh bhai) and the older students. The car for their travel







was assembled by the children of Progress Group along with the seniors. Some children practised their band by themselves to perform on the day. On the final day the juggernaut (car) was decorated with colourful clothes and flower garlands,





ready to run on the road. The three Lords were worshipped with many devotional songs by our teachers and the children. The children of Smile group presented a Sambalpuri dance. Some rituals were followed before the taking of the idols to the car. The car was worshipped



with coconut and incense. Pranjal Bhaiya took the role of the Gajapati who swept the road and the car before rolling on the road.







The festival started with the sound of conch and Hari bol. The villagers

were also ready with their bands and their devotion to pay their homage to the Lords. The car was pulled by ropes from the school to the hostel, with everyone jostling to have an opportunity to do this. Everyone danced and sang to the glory of Lord Jagannath and his brother Balabhadra ji and sister Subhadra. The villagers and the children danced to the live music. Finally, the car reached the hostel and there the Lords were welcomed with band and devotional songs. They were worshipped for eight days with a different special prasad every day. In the evenings, children and the teachers offered their







devotional songs and chanted the Mahamantra Hare Rama Hare Krishna. Sulochana didi narrated stories of Lord Jagannath and his different incarnations. On the day of their return, everyone gathered in the hall and paid their homage with many devotional songs. The Lords returned to their abode.

### **5<sup>th</sup> July- Annual Day- Tara di's and school's birthday**



The children did extensive decorations on the stage and in the hall for this most looked forward to event. Prior to this, the whole school underwent spring cleaning.



Many of the children participated in cooking savouries and sweetmeats, which was undertaken the day D-Day.



Everyone went to the ashram in the morning for meditation. This was followed by Hawan in the girls' hostel.

The programme was as follows: -

Peace group performed a play in Hindi.



Bliss group sang an action song on my body.

Unity group enacted a play in English, the Cat's party. They also performed a dance on the song Crazy frog.

Victory put on two plays in English- the Gingerbread Man and Three little pigs and a play in Hindi "Kechla ka jungle."



Smile group presented a Kathak dance and performed Two colour coat- a play in English.





Perseverance group enacted Andheri Nagri, Chaupat Raja- a play in Hindi.

Progress group performed a Konkani Dance. They enacted a play in English- three trees.

Gratitude group presented a dance- Avyi Giri Nandini.





Jagat guided and led the orchestra with the gratitude group.

In the evening we had Savitri reading where all the children who can read participated in reading of portion of Sri Aurobindo's great epic.



## 6<sup>th</sup> July-Tree Plantation



Tree plantation drive was carried out in the campus of the girls' hostel, the barren hills and on the roadsides. Everyone

participated enthusiastically. Saplings were collected from the ashram nursery and the forests. The main aim was to make our microcosm greener.





Children in groups went to different places with shovels and planted approximately 3000 plants.



August is the month of festivities and celebrations. The feelings of joy and bliss filled the environment. The children exhibited their talents through different activities like speech, poem recitation, art, storytelling, quiz, singing and dancing and theatre. It is the month to celebrate the Great Heroes of yesteryears.





## 13<sup>th</sup> August- Chachaji's birthday



Shri Surendra Nath Jauhar 'Faquir' (1903-1986), who is our beloved chachaji- a freedom fighter, a storyteller and the founder of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram (Delhi Branch) was born on 13<sup>th</sup> August in Punjab, which is now a part of Pakistan. To honour the day, a collective meditation was held by the children in the Ashram's Meditation Hall. As

Chachaji was a prominent member of Arya Samaj, a special hawan was performed by the children in the girls' hostel. In their literature classes, stories of Chachaji were read to the children. A few of his stories were narrated by the children of Aspiration Group and skits on some of the stories were enacted by the children of Progress Group.





## 14<sup>th</sup> August- Babaji Maharaj's birthday

Sri Ramkrushna Das, a staunch devotee of the Mother was a visionary



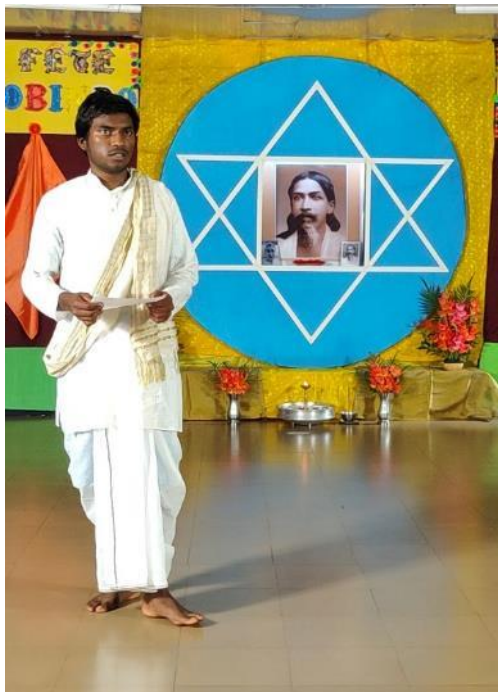
who led an austere life and guided the devotees of the state of Odisha and worked for the implementation of Integral Education in the schools. He also made people aware of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo's vision by awakening their consciousness through study circles in different regions. His selfless service left an incredible mark on the land of Odisha. On this special occasion, a special assembly was held. Srinath Bhaiya enlightened the children with his soulful anecdotes. As he emphasised on the Naam Jap, everyone repeated the Mother's name for half an hour. The assembly ended with a silent meditation and everyone left the hall wrapped in a blanket of calm serenity.







## 15<sup>th</sup> August- Independence Day and Sri Aurobindo's Birthday



Sri Aurobindo a multifaceted personality- a yogi, philosopher, freedom fighter, a spiritual guide and above all an incarnation. His 75<sup>th</sup> birthday is also the Independence Day of our country.

To commemorate this auspicious occasion, some intra school competitions like speech, quiz, singing, dancing,

poem recitation and art were organised. Each child chose any three corners according to her or his choice. On the final day, prizes were given for the best performances.

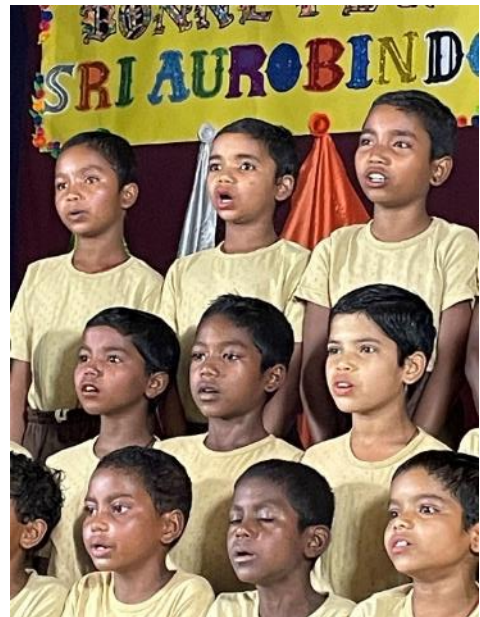






On the 15<sup>th</sup> morning, the inmates gathered in the ashram for special meditation before 6 o'clock in the morning to observe the auspicious

day. It was followed by the hoisting of the Mother's flag. Our little ones, ready in their marching clothes and some children as part of the band arrived in the ashram to salute the flag. The Mother's flag-bearing the dream of undivided India was unfurled by Pt. Shantanu Bhattacharya, the famous classical singer. Children offered their veneration in the ashram meditation hall. Children offered some programmes as an offering for the day.





The children of Peace group presented an action song I Salute My flag, which was followed by a dance on the song *Sri Aurobindo Name Anando* by the children of Bliss Group.



The children of Unity Group displayed their talents in the play- The Mice Wedding. The little ones of Victory Group recited the poem- Who by Sri Aurobindo with action and their tiny feet danced in rhythm with the song *Desh Rangila Rangila*. "Krishna" a sonnet by Sri Aurobindo was recited by the children of Courage Group.





They also put up a dance on the song Chakhde India and melodiously sang the song Lahran Dun.

All the senior children from Smile Group onwards participated in the



play on India's Freedom Struggle, a play which depicted the complete freedom movement in brief. Many of them gained

knowledge from the play and also got an insight of the pre-independent era. The play also included songs and dances which everyone had learnt during the evening meditation time. Everyone dressed up according to their role and the children made props with the help of teachers to use in the play. Shantanu Da taught two songs in a span of two days- *humne Tumko Dil se Lagaya* and *Bhagaban Aurobindonah*, which were presented by his students.



*Sandeshe Aate Hain*, a remix song was danced on by the Perseverance Group children. They used many gymnastics skills in the dance which was an astounding performance. Shampa,



Shamika, Rukmani and Parul danced on the song *Ai Watan, Watan mere*. The programme ended with a silent meditation.

30<sup>th</sup> August was celebrated as Raksha Bandhan.



Children of all the groups made rakhi using silk threads and colourful beads. The older children from Perseverance group onwards learnt new macrame designs to weave their bands. Sweetmeats were prepared before the programme. Tulika, Brishti, Shampa, Shamika and Malti put up a puppet show on Rani Karmavati and Raja Humayun. They also mesmerized the audience with their soulful song Rakhi ki Laaj. Jagat, a senior student narrated stories related to the history and culture of rakhi. The children of Perseverance group wrote poems in Hindi for their brothers and sisters and they recited them. They also presented the song Rakhi Ka Bandhan. The children of Courage group sang the song Rakhi ki Dor in tune. The whole school participated in



tying rakhis to each other and fostering the spirit of brotherhood. In the afternoon everyone gathered in the cowshed to pay their homage to the cows who have been fostering us with their pure and sweet milk, which is no less than nectar.



7<sup>th</sup> September- Janmashtami was celebrated with much fanfare and as an offering to Lord Krishna. The celebrations began with soulful bhajans and continued with singing and dancing, with a gradual increase in tempo. On this auspicious occasion, the children of Victory group recited the poem Krishna by Sri



Aurobindo and presented a dance on the song Govind Gokul Aayo. The children of Unity group mesmerized by dancing in rhythm on the song Vrindavan Mein Kanha Aaya.





Rohini, Manya, Prerna danced on the song Raat Suhani which they learnt by themselves.

Amita, who loves to dance, presented a classical dance with Gauri on the song *Radha Raman Hari*. The children of Perseverance group presented a song Tum Prem Ho. The children of Smile group presented a dance on *Shri Krishna Govinda hare Murari* and



a play Krishna and Sudama in English in two groups. The children of Peace and Bliss group put up a dance on the song Pyaara Kanhaiya and



Adhram Madhram respectively. The little ones danced in rhythm.



Their colourful lehngas for both the girls and boys hypnotized the audience. The Courage group children recited the poem Yah Kadam ka Ped Agar Maa by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan. Amita and Parul put up a Bihu dance and Suparna didi, a classical dancer fascinated everyone with her beautiful dance. The event ended with home-made



*prasaad* which made the programme even sweeter.

## Visitors

Shri Sandeep Saha visited Kechla. He helped Basant, who is doing B. Com (Hons.) in Indian economics and taught the theory part of physical education to Shampa and Shamika. He also took classes for





other groups. Shri Saha takes online classes regularly and his periodically coming to Kechla helps with them as well.



Sulochana di- guided Victory Group in their projects and took social science classes of Perseverance Group.



Although she worked on the topic Unity and Diversity. She made the topic interesting for the children by taking examples from their day-to-day activities into context. As usual, she mesmerized the children with her stories and also guided the teachers to set up a conducive environment for the children.



Bageshree (Acharya) di visited Kechla for the first time. She is an educationist and artist. Her hidden and untapped talents were most unexpected and a joy for all the children she worked with.

Laxmipriya Roul (Laxmi di) from Jodhpur had visited for over a month during her summer break. She is an artist and did wonderful work with



the children. She also did wall paintings and uplifted the looks of the school.

Surajita Panda from Mirambika visited the school. She spent all her time in organising the school office and guiding the senior students and teachers about the art and science of office management.

Divya Shrivastava, a teacher of Hindi and music volunteered for a week in Auro-Mira Vidya Mandir during her summer break. During her stay, she took some classes of vocal music. She also taught the younger children some rhymes and songs.





Nigel George, Archita Murthy and Vijay Shanti Murthy visited the school during the summer. They spent over ten days and contributed by guiding the students who are doing B.A (Hons.) in English and the ones in class 12<sup>th</sup>.







(Pandit) Shantanu (Bhattacharya), his wife- Durba didi and daughter Mitra, all accomplished artistes visited Kechla for their annual 'pilgrimage'. From sunrise to late at night, they were actively singing, teaching, giving lecture demonstrations; in short making the

whole place melodious.

## Trip

### Trip to North India

A trip for Smile Group children was organised starting from 16<sup>th</sup> September and returning on 5<sup>th</sup> October. 27 children of the smile group, five senior students, three teachers



and Suman bhaiya comprised the group. The places to be covered were Delhi, Rishikesh, Nainital, Ramgarh and Agra. The following is a brief report of the trip:-



16<sup>th</sup> September- Everyone woke up early and started from Kechla at 4:30 am. We started by autorickshaws, and a few went by motorcycles. The auto went up to the railway bridge and from there they went walking or by motorcycle to the



Koraput Railway Station. They boarded a train for Rayagada railway station, where they changed trains and boarded Samta express for Delhi. The train was rather late when it reached Nizamuddin railway station.

18<sup>th</sup> September- The group walked to **Qutab Minar** after lunch. They spent a couple of hours there, discussing the history and architecture of the complex. They walked back and returned by 4:30 pm.



After their evening snacks, they played football. After dinner, they had ice cream and went to the old Delhi railway station by a chartered bus and boarded a train for Haridwar.



19<sup>th</sup> September- They reached Haridwar at 6 am. They went to **Sivanand Ashram** where they had breakfast. After breakfast they toured Sivanand Ashram. Then they went to **Dayanand ashram**, where Kurban chacha warmly welcomed them and showed them around. Swami Chidanand ji addressed the children and spoke to them about True Life. Swami ji also discussed with the children about the aim of their lives.



After this, the children put up a small performance where they sang, danced, did storytelling.

Then Kurban chacha taught them a song- old man Romeo.



20<sup>th</sup> September The children again saw various aspects of the ashram. They then went to Ram Jhula and Laxman Jhula and to various ashrams and temples on the other side of the Ganges.



21<sup>st</sup> September- The children went to Vashisha Gufa. Swami ji explained about the cave and its significance.

In the evening, the children boarded the train for Kathgodam.





22<sup>nd</sup> September- The children went by bus from Kathgodam to Nainital. They walked up from Bara Patthar to Van Niwas, Sri Aurobindo Ashram (Delhi Branch).

During their stay in Nainital, the children did trekking to meditation rock, tiffin top and other places. They did activities like- rappelling, bouldering and river crossing. They had sessions of meditation, discussion and attended lectures.



25<sup>th</sup> September- Most of the children trekked 16 km to Kainchi dham. Some of them went by road straight to Ramgarh. After darshan at Kainchi dham, the children went by road to Ramgarh. Four of the senior students



trekked from Kainchi dham to Madhuban ashram in Talla Ramgarh, which is a distance of 18 km.







26<sup>th</sup> September- All the children did various treks during their stay in Ramgarh. They also trekked to Mountain Paradise. Every day they



would trek 15 km on an average. In the evenings, the children learnt weaving baskets with bamboo, making flowers with wool and also learnt a different form of drawing.

29<sup>th</sup> September- The children went to Kathgodam by bus and boarded the train for Delhi.

30<sup>th</sup> September- After breakfast, the children visited the Lotus Temple. They





commuted by Metro. This was their first experience by Metro. They attended meditation in Baha'i temple.

1<sup>st</sup> October- The children visited Humayun's Tomb, Science Museum, Purana Quila. They also visited Waste-to-Wonder park where they saw replicas of Leaning Tower of Pisa, Taj Mahal, Statue of Liberty, Colosseum, amongst other attractions.

2<sup>nd</sup> October- The group did shramdan in the morning as it was Gandhi ji's birthday.







In the evening they went to Akshardham Temple where they saw all the shows and attractions, including the boat ride which showed the entire biography of swami Neelkanth. They also saw the Indian history in the field of science. They also saw the beautiful show of fountains, light and water with soulful music.

3<sup>rd</sup> October- The group boarded the train for Agra. Arpit Singh sir received them. He gave them a sumptuous breakfast and then took them to see Taj Mahal and Red Fort. After a wonderful



lunch, they rested in Delhi Public School, Agra. They had an early dinner at 6:30 pm and boarded the train at night, for their return journey.





## Physical Activities

All the students at the school are avid sportsmen / sportswomen. The very young who are up to 6 years of age have an hour of games in the morning. They do some exercises and play minor games during this period.



The students staying in the hostel have yogasana from 6 am to 6:30 am every day.



All the students have sports in the evening for over an hour where they start with exercises and running, followed by playing games. They play football, basketball, volleyball and many minor games.



During the summer months they go for swimming, instead of games. The older students of Faith and Aspiration groups are good

swimmers. The students of Humility, Gratitude and Progress groups improved their swimming skills. The students of Perseverance group learnt swimming this year.



The students take turns with the three Kayaks we have and on some days also go for rowing.

