

ANNUAL REPORT

2015 – 2016



Then and now, children will be children!

Table of Contents

Chairperson's Message	3
Director's Report	5
Family Based Rehabilitation	7
Early Intervention	9
Day Center	10
Employment Education Center	12
Youth Program	14
Department of Physiotherapy	16
Department of Occupational Therapy	18
Department of Speech, Language and Communication	18
Vision Center	19
Department of Inclusion	20
Community Based Rehabilitation	21
Human Resource Development	24
Disability Legislative Unit	26
Fund Raising Management	28
VaccesS	30
Travel Details	31
The Governing Body	32
The General Body	33
Bank Details	34
Staff List	35
Auditor's Report	37

Our Mission

WE FOCUS ON:

- Persons with cerebral palsy, no matter how profoundly affected, and other disabilities, where facilities are inaccessible.
- Their families and the communities they live in.
- Demystification, Independence & Inclusion.

WE BELIEVE:

- In the right to equality of opportunity.
- In the right to make informed choices and thereby meet individual needs.
- That disability is both a development and human rights issue.

WE VALUE:

- Differences
- Collective Initiative
- The spirit and positive attitude we bring to work each day

MOTTO:

- Positive and Proactive

(Formerly 'The Spastics Society of India, Chennai')

The rains wrought havoc in December. For us in our haven at Kotturpuram and Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya there were additional anxieties for the welfare of our babies, children, young adults, staff in the city and the building. Good Samaritans rushed with support, families and friends rallied as one.

Unique to Vidya Sagar, were the experiences of persons with disabilities as they faced nature's fury. Children and adults on wheelchairs braved the rising raging waters, some were without help close by, a wheelchair user was lifted with the wheelchair into a boat in the dark of night, a few lost precious possessions bought with hard earned money. They helped themselves as best as they could and reached out to one another! Their courage and cheer under trial just like all the others affected in Chennai, made us proud.

The project reports roll out the numbers but there is a critical factor that can't be quantified the climate and spirit in a work place which enables this; it is seen in the smiles and laughter of the children and all who come to Vidya Sagar....

Every one willy nilly when they enter Vidya Sagar is suffused with positive energies ...perhaps it's the children who trust us so much that brings out the best in us, perhaps it's the adults... whose life experiences with their ring of truth make us drop our earlier beliefs, and learn anew.

When such learning happens, all negative energies drop to make space for better energies and so...kama, krodha, moha, lobha, madha, matsarya, ahamkara, swartha, amanavata, anyaaya have no place!!....all drop (dussahara) to make place for higher learning, a dharmic purpose with righteousness and joy that we believe we breathe into our work, where every child is valuable , every child a guru and where we learn and rise together.

The coming years will see new exciting developments and challenges, with the foundations of 30 years of deep values as the emotionally intelligent organisation monitors and regulates itself, perseveres against odds, motivates itself, and reaches out to many more with social skills and empathy!

Usha Ramakrishnan

Chairperson's Message

When I discussed what my message could focus on with my colleagues, smilingly and, tongue in cheek they said..."Usha akka .give us some gyan..."

And I wondered.. isn't "gyan" always within each of us.....it's just about removing debris of negativity if any in our thoughts, words and actions that covers it and let one's own gyan blaze !

This year brings to mind myriad images and happenings- together they form a wondrous collage that does have gyan!

The 30th year of Vidya Sagar started with "a great land-ing!"of 27 grounds allotted to us by the Govt. of Tamil Nadu at Karapakkam Village. There was great jubilation all around!

It has been a long wait.....However, I do believe, things happen at the right time. The interim years have been a period of reflection and evolving for the organization. We are better poised for the next level of expansion, with lessons learnt over the years directly from persons with disabilities .

This evolving complex change happens, the gurus say, with the coming together of vision, skills, incentives, resources and clear action plans.

While our vision and mission, updating of skills and forming action plans are woven into our work, where incentives include the opportunity to find new solutions to challenging needs, availability of financial resources has been critical for the continuous development of the organisation.

Vidya Sagar has been fortunate, leading corporates known for their value systems have trusted our work and funded vital projects, quiet donors have donated generously. Every rupee is valuable and carefully utilized in the best interest of the stake holders.

Vidya Sagar is a community funded organisation...and a reflection of a caring community!

Together our vision, skills, resources and action plans have enabled us to add a new program every year, (many among them pioneering ones.) Vidya Sagar has received two National Awards over the past 10 years for outstanding work in the field of disability.

Another major community event which we want to make into an annual event was a two day seminar cum exhibition of products that promote access. 'VaccesS' as this event is called was held in Vidya Sagar. We were surprised at the response this generated. Manufacturers, retailers and consumers came to this exhibition. Complicated and sophisticated products based on technology to simple adapted gardening tools - were all exhibited. This year we hope to make this a national expo.

Work in Vidya Sagar carries on as usual with a motivated and dynamic team, with every project fine tuning their regular services and always adding new elements and dimensions; so no day is ever static. More of this in the report.

The highlight of last year was that we acquired land - given by the Government of Tamil Nadu in lieu of land that had been promised to us many years earlier. This land is in the heart of the IT sector of the city.

We hope, in the future to use this land to promote models of assistive living and also run our training institute. A huge thank you to the Government of Tamil Nadu and the people who pursued this relentlessly in a single minded fashion - Senior Advocate Sriram Panchu, Ms. Elina Maller, Mr. Dandapani and of course our Chairperson, Mrs. Usha Ramakrishnan,

I cannot end without putting on record our huge gratitude to Mrs. Usha Ramakrishnan, our Chairperson. This year Usha retires as her term is over. Her contribution to the concept and growth and stabilization of Vidya Sagar cannot be measured. She has supported and mentored staff, students, parents in her inimitable style, -- a combination of practical wisdom with spiritual philosophy. I have had many debates with her on numerous occasions - but all through have held her in high respect and loved and enjoyed working with her. I will miss you Usha.

Thank you Usha Akka from the bottom of every Vidya Sagar's heart. And I am sure from the heart of everyone working in the disability sector.

Rajul Padmanabhan

Director's Report

Last year will be etched in every Chennaite's memory. Chennai witnessed the worst flood this city had seen in the last decade -- but it also brought into focus, the resilience and generosity of the Chennaite.

Kotturpuram was one of the areas that was badly affected, but luckily our main building was safe - except for the ground floor. And therefore our building was used as a shelter for some of the residents in that area. But our Vocational Unit in Venkatanarayana road was completely gutted---the adapted machines, the raw material, the finished stocks were floating like paper boats on a sea of sewage water- the feeling of despair, frustration and helplessness was soon transformed into a determination to see this unit up again. And it was not difficult as there was help from all sides - like Tata Elxsi.

I also want to make a special mention of the students of IICP in Kolkata. They collected a sum of money and sent it for Vidya Sagar students who had lost everything in the floods. Thank you students of IICP.

Our students also collected over a lakh and gave it for a school in Cuddalore. The staff of course, rose to the occasion and worked tirelessly in camps distributing food and medicines and helping in the clean up.

On a different note, as we complete our 30 years and move on to a new decade, to new beginnings and a realignment to the UNCRPD - we realized that we had to rework our vision statement. This, as is customary in Vidya Sagar was done in a very participatory manner. The person who had facilitated the previous vision statement, Ms. Anu Naidu, agreed to facilitate this one too. After long discussions with students, both alumini and the present ones; parents staff, support staff, the Governing body and the General body and some of our friends in Chennai, a new vision statement was drawn up. What emerged was really quite interesting, for not much needed to be changed - there were just a few expansions to the previous statements.

Outstation program:

People located outside Chennai avail our services through the Outstation Program. It is conducted thrice a year during the months of January, April and August. During the year 2015-16, we worked with 66 families from different parts of the country.

During our Outstation Program, we offer special education, physiotherapy, speech and communication therapy, vision therapy, occupational therapy, parent counseling and legal advice. After a holistic assessment, we also provide orthotic aids and adaptations and relevant furniture, based on the needs of the child. We create a program plan for the child with the family to ensure that the parents can implement the plan independently.

Our database of organizations registered under the National Trust helps in referring persons with disabilities to other organizations, in other parts of the country.

Home Management

Vidya Sagar believes that an empowered family makes an empowered child. But in certain cases a person with disability is not able to access rehabilitation services on a daily basis.

The home management program works closely with parents and caregivers of persons with disabilities. They avail services through this program, once or twice a week, based on the individual's needs. The caregiver/parent is trained simultaneously with the child/adult.

The uniqueness of this program lies in its flexibility. For example, if a child is unable to come to Vidya Sagar even once a week due to various reasons such as commuting from a far

off place or has health and family issues, this child and family will be given a training for that specific period.

In the year 2015-2016 home management program worked with 23 children and their families. At times, when children in the Day Centre found it difficult to come regularly due to various reasons they were accommodated in this program with favorable results.

Regular home visits were conducted during which we worked with the extended family and also created any environmental modifications required at home. A customized feedback form for parents is being used to update the program and incorporate innovative program planning.



Trip to Mahabalipuram

FBR Outings:

- Trip to Mahabalipuram.
- Visit to Dino Jungle at Citi Center Mall.
- Visit to The Farm - an organic farm on OMR.

Family Based Rehabilitation



Workshop for Parents

The objective of family based rehabilitation is to empower the parents and family of the child with disability. The program focuses on helping the parents understand their child's disability, follow the intervention program and above all, enjoy their child. Information about Government schemes and programs and new legislation policies regarding disability is shared with the family.

Family Based Rehabilitation - Advisory and Referral Clinic:

The first point of contact to Vidya Sagar is the Advisory and Referral Clinic. Initial assessments are done and the person with disability is directed so that they can avail specialized services. In the year 2015-16, the team assessed

389 children and adults with disabilities, which included initial assessments, follow ups and reviews.

Persons with disabilities from other states of India like Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Assam, Karnataka, Jharkand, Chattisgarh and Odisha accessed our services. People from other countries like the UK, USA, Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Oman also availed the services of this department.

Networking with doctors, physiotherapists, speech therapists, ophthalmologists, orthopedics, occupational therapists, ENTs, psychologists, psychiatrist, counselors and dieticians is one of the key aspects of the referral clinic.

Day Center



Experimenting with science

The Day Center has once again held the flag high as a resource and demonstration center of Vidya Sagar.

The day center runs as a school for students of age 6 years to 18 years. The students had individual speech, language and communication sessions focusing on independent communication skills. Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Vision Training was done, to use the functional vision optimally. These services were built in into their daily sessions. Co-curricular activities like adapted games and sports, adapted books and a toy library, as well as art and movement therapy were accessed twice a week.

A lot of emphasis was laid on mobility, participation in activities with adaptations (hand function), communication and emotional development, choice making, responsibility for their things, appropriate manner of expressing emotions, communicating to parents in a formal manner were given top priority.

The teachers, therapists and counselors shared first-hand information about the progress of each student during the internal meetings which were held once a month.

20 students between 12 to 14 years who would benefit with prevocational training were assessed and started a transition to prevocational training. This new concept of transition was thought-over carefully as these students had complex communication needs and also needed high support.

The curriculum included understanding the neighborhood by exploration, understanding basic money skills by running a small shop, understanding their body and why they need help and being able to communicate with strangers using voice output devices. Weight bearing, change of position and functional use of hands were the primary goals in physiotherapy.

Early Intervention



A child plays in the ball pool

The Early Intervention Program provides services for infants and toddlers with multiple disabilities under the age of 6 years. The Early Intervention classes runs in 2 shifts. The morning batch is from 9.30 to 1.30 pm with children in the age group of 3-6 years.

The afternoon batch is from 2pm to 3.30 pm with children under the age of 3 years. In the academic year of 2015-2016 the Early Intervention Program had 24 children. Apart from these children there were 2 children in the morning batch from USA for 6 weeks.

In Early Intervention, work is done in physical, cognitive, communication, social and/or emotional areas. After a screening and assessment, intervention is offered in special education, physiotherapy, occupational therapy,

communication training, speech therapy, vision training, family training and counseling. Regular home visits are an important part of this program.

Physiotherapy sessions focus on mobility, hand function and posture of the child. The children are also trained to become more independent in feeding and toileting and other activities of daily living.

Workshops Conducted:

- Mrs. Poonam Natarajan, founder of Vidya Sagar, interacted with parents of adults during our Outstation Program regarding National Trust and its schemes for people with disabilities.
- Mrs. Theresa, our counselor, had a session with the parents of Early Intervention and Home Management on parenting and time management.
- Hands-on feeding workshops were conducted for parents by the Occupational Therapy Department.
- Rajul Padbhanabhan, Director of Vidya Sagar, had an interactive session with the parents of Early Intervention and Home Management.
- Parents and children attended a story telling workshop conducted by Ms. Jeeva and her team at Museum Theatre.

Events

- The parents of Early Intervention were involved in a rangoli competition during the Pongal celebrations.
- The parents decorated the school with rangoli during the Annual Day celebrations.

Highlights:

- **Four children have moved into mainstream schools in their respective home towns.**
- **Various modes of communication aids have made remarkable improvement in peer interaction and socialization.**
- **A year-long internship with a German student proved to be a source of mutual learning for us.**

Employment Education Center



Paper mache work being done by the adults

The floods that hit Chennai in the month of December had a huge impact on the centre. The unit was totally destroyed. There was 7 feet of water in the premises, and it took nearly a week for the water to go down and a further three months for us to get the place restored .

At the same time, community support was received which helped us in acquiring new machines, replenishing raw materials, purchase of furniture and carrying out the repair of damaged equipment and infrastructure. The damaged leaf ware unit was replaced with a new advanced machine, with 2 cup dye and 1 saucer dye. The lamination unit was also replaced.

Employment Education Centre aims at creating livelihood opportunities for persons with disabilities. After the completion of pre-vocational training, the students move to the Employment Education Centre to acquire work skills and skills to make specific products.

The goal of EEC is to give as much exposure as we can in all areas of life. EEC focuses on vocational skills & functional life skills. While giving these Inputs, the strengths, needs and interests of each individual is assessed and planned accordingly. This process helps in facilitating the individual to choose their vocation.

This group also worked closely with the occupational therapist for upper arm adaptations. The students who needed functional vision training were grouped together and had daily sessions. Counseling for parents and parent support group was the focus for this group.

The middle school students, 30 in number, were in two groups, one pursuing academics and the other learning the prevocational work along with functional literacy, which looked at money skills, communication skills, understanding banking, independent mobility to work and knowing more about the country and its culture. Both the academic groups and the grade curriculum had to work on the money skills, country and culture syllabus. Both the groups had many opportunities to participate in the mainstream community through the KFI drama festival, science competitions held by Birla Planetarium and the Sports Meet. The students won prizes in the science competition and sports meet, bringing laurels to the school. They also participated in a design for change and in creating logo for the neighborhood cleanliness society. The students went on a learning trip to Delhi and Agra to understand the historical culture of India. They visited the Rashtrapathi Bhavan and Parliament House. The students also elected the Interact Club members and took up activities to serve the community.

The outstanding work of this group of students was in collecting a lakh of rupees for a school in Cuddalore that was gutted by the floods. This was well appreciated by the school authorities.

The Transition curriculum was implemented for the high school students this year, the objective of which was to prepare the students for adulthood and work. The curriculum was designed to cover personality development, career guidance, handling money, communication skills, exploring different

vocations, learning work habits and ethics, computer literacy, disability rights and advocacy. A total of 20 students between the age group of 16 to 20 years joined this program. Discussions were held with parents of this group and aids and adaptations needed for vocational training were procured.

Another path breaking step was setting up a prevocational training unit for students with high physical needs. A total of 10 students who were very enthusiastic about work but needed a lot of support were identified and grouped together. The unit started with identifying the suitable vocation and then specially designing aids and adaptations required for improving production and reducing the physical strain on the students. Posture management, maintenance therapy and independence in communication using assistive technology was also given equal importance.

The adult leisure program with 22 students continues to be the respite for the adults and their families. The products done by the students in this unit are in great demand, particularly paper technology furniture. The students enjoy this as much as they enjoy exploring the different places in the city. Here too, maintenance therapy and posture management is given importance.



Study tour to Delhi

Youth Program

The Youth Program, as the name implies works with Youth with Disabilities. It has been focusing on skill development, employment, access, leisure, support and counseling, self-determination and advocacy. In the year 2015-16 project activities included:

Livelihood:

Open employment has always been a challenge. Tariq, one of our ex-student has completed his Masters in history. He got a job as front office personnel after 6 months of 'on the job training'.

Swaminathan is a brilliant artist and his drawings have a unique style. Rakesh learnt painting while he was in Vidya Sagar. They were able to outsource their art to corporate firms as a means of livelihood. Few of our alumni also got virtual training from "Enable India" on data entry and back office work.

Skill Development training:

Conducted every Saturday, the courses offered are as follows:

Computer skills: 10 students opted to attend the course. Volunteers from a corporate office called Accenture trained the students. They helped improve the students' skills in Computer application.

French Classes: There were a few individuals who wanted to learn a foreign language. Ms. Hema V. Parthasarathy, (head, Translation Cell, Alliance Francaise of Madras (AFM), and a recipient of the Officer l'Ordre des Palmes

Academiques award) volunteered to take French classes for those interested. There were four participants for this class – one of them had very little functional speech and used an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) chart in French! We were honoured to have Mrs. Parthasarathy to conduct these classes.

Mathematics Classes: Some youngsters felt that they could manage day-to-day life needs better if they learned some essential mathematics skills.

Mr. Prasanth took a short course on "Managing Math in Daily Life".

Support and Counselling:

Three alumni students availed these services . This was conducted by trained councillors who had also done a training "Counselor Education-Disability and Mental Health" conducted by Vidya Sagar

Leisure:

The Vidya Sagar Alumni Association has been conducting training on Boccia every Saturday. Eight persons from the youth program go for this. Their goal is to form a team and conduct National competitions .

The Kalakkal Café:

The Kalakkal Café runs every Saturday between 5.00 to 9.00 pm and brings in a host of professionals and local bands. This is organized in the evenings, and is popular among visitors.

The centre offers training courses in weaving, paper products, lamination, and making paper plates and leaf-ware. The centre comprises of 6 weaving units, 3 leaf cup production units, one lamination unit, one food grinding unit, one paper plate unit, and one unit to make craft products and paper products.



Weaving Stoles— for which there is a huge demand.

A new envelope making machine was obtained which helped in starting of a new project. Out of the seven students in this unit, most of them were able to acquire skills and work consistently on the products.



Hand painting the gift envelopes

Design ideas from Ms. Kalyani Pramod helped in up grading our products.

While the production is going on, the concept of money, time, selling, buying, marketing and the source of getting the raw material and their usage is also incorporated.

The Centre also endeavors to increase the awareness among families and the community about the rights and abilities of persons with disabilities to earn a livelihood.



Reintroducing the Lamination Machine

This year a stipend was given to the students to motivate them.

The team went for two sales organized by corporate houses. The aim is to promote the products and create awareness. Leisure and outings are a part of the program.

Along with the training students are encouraged to travel on their own. This poses a number of challenges which need to be addressed.

Trips and Outings :

The students made regular visits to the malls— which they loved . They also , as a gang went to films .

As a unit they visited Vellore near Chennai to see the Golden Temple

Department of Physiotherapy



Accessible swings make for an enjoyable time for everyone

The Physiotherapy Department consists of 7 physiotherapists and 3 physiotherapy assistants who attend to the specific needs of the students from various departments.

62 students from the Day Center and 14 students from the Early Intervention Unit were given regular therapy. Each student was given 2-4 sessions per week depending on their specific issues and needs, and all the students had a group therapy session every day with a group goal. Ongoing support in assessments and follow ups was given to Advisory and Referral Clinic,

Community Based Rehabilitation Program and Employment Education Center.

Each student underwent an assessment process to identify their maximal functional abilities and marked difficulties. The assessment covers posture, balance, mobility, hand function and the daily living skills in relation to the neuromuscular, musculoskeletal, sensory perceptual and other systems. The assessment team includes parents and the teacher as well. Goals for the term and the year are set considering the students' and the parents' priority. The condition of the child and the prognosis is explained to the new parent. Teachers and the parents are trained in appropriate and alternative positions, use of aids and adaptations, mobility training and transitions. Necessary adaptations for positioning and daily living skills are provided for home.

A wheelchair accessible playground with a new swing, merry-go-round and a hanging bridge was designed by the therapy department. Now, a child on a wheelchair can get on a swing and feel the swinging movement. This also helped in improving their confidence, self-esteem, balance and equilibrium reactions. As some of the students were using the hanging bridge and the merry-go-round in supported standing positions, it improved their vestibular and proprioceptive system and was challenging and fun at the same time.

The café has hosted few get-togethers and birthday celebrations for children in the neighborhood.

Entrepreneur skills:

Shashank, one of the volunteers, was convinced that youth should be exposed to entrepreneurship skills. He volunteered to evolve a course on entrepreneur skills adapted from an existing course called Accelerator Program.

Accelerator Program: This is the first time that Accelerator programme had been designed and conducted for persons with disabilities. The program objective was to give exposure on how to start and run a business.

This program was designed for multi-ability groups between 23-42yrs and was conducted thrice a week for 4 months. The training was taken up by nine of the alumni of Vidya Sagar.

It involved a series of classroom workshops, projects, games, peer learning, interactions with business persons and start-up founders.

Mentors and subject specialists were called in to lecture. The course evolved with the student and trainer learning during the process.

A series of small projects were chosen and carried out by participants to discover more about business ideologies, customers, market, business models, and enable personal growth.

The projects evolved by the end of the Acceleration Programme:

Teja—who is passionately fond of art worked out a comic strip called “Wheelie Man”.

Bhavana—a strong disability activist edits and produces an online magazine called “Connect Special”.

Anjana—had been wanting to write a book for a long time. She finally did— “Evolving Angel” which is available on Amazon.

Rakesh—an environment advocate works with recycled craft products. This company is called “Upcycle Artz”

Rajiv—The head of Disability Legislation Unit (DLU) in Vidya Sagar designed a website “Assistance on Demand”.

Hari - a regular foodie—worked on selling Biryani

Aditya—now runs a travel tour company called “Explore differently”.

Janakiraman-wants to start a stationary store in his locality.

These are some of the small business start-ups that the students worked on. The experience during this period was rich and very different, for not only the youth with disability but also for the staff . How it is sustained requires more thought, partnerships and support.



Soft Skills Training was enjoyed by all

Department of Occupational Therapy

The Department of Occupational Therapy started off this year with one full-time therapist and a consulting therapist. We had a volunteer on a full-time basis. To start with, a special oro-motor workshop was conducted for parents of the students from the Early Intervention Unit to emphasize and tackle problems related to drooling, mouthing and other feeding issues.

This year, regular group sessions were conducted for a particular group of students who needed sensory and physical stimulation to concentrate better in their functional skills. These hour-long group sessions happened every day during the morning. We were also able to introduce new group sessions for students with specific sensory needs and thus their sensory needs were met in a more focused way through the week.

Mrs. Geraldine Daniel and Mrs. Nithya Daniel conducted a CRE course. The CRE titled UMOJA was an interesting 3-day workshop which focused on exploring Sensory Integration.

In October 2015, Mrs. Sarita Kamble joined us as a full time therapist. 70 students joined the weekly OT sessions. We were able to conduct regular follow-up assessments for the students attending Occupational Therapy sessions through the months from October to March. We also participated in V-Access and exhibited aids and adaptations for activities of Daily Living in the month of February

Department of Speech, Language and Communication

Vidya Sagar is well known for its expertise in the area of Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) The Speech, Language and Communication Department functions as a training resource and development centre within Vidya Sagar.

The regular assessments, setting of goals, planning and training for students at the Day Centre and Family Based Rehabilitation is carried out. Individuals with disabilities from outside also availed the services of the department.

Training for parent/caregiver is built into the schedule. These assessments, interventions and training plans and progress are well documented. 300 students with communication difficulties were assessed and the programs were implemented.

We have imported some devices which benefit the Early Intervention Center. Communication devices and low-tech charts are periodically updated and maintained by the department. This year, we had a speech therapist as a consultant. This helped us to focus on speech training for students below the age of eight years.

There are two major and prestigious colleges for Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs) who send their students for internship to the department. 52 SLP students interned this year. These internships gives them good exposure and opportunity to learn about Augmentative and Alternative Communication. Alongside the students, 13 teacher trainees and community workers from the Community Based

Trainings:

Physiotherapy Department is very active in training in house staff as well as people from outside. In-house training includes lectures for the PG Diploma classes and need-based workshops for the staff. A workshop on feeding was done for the parents of a CBR partner organization and the staff of Vidya Sagar.

There were four interns from Singapore for a period of two weeks. One physiotherapist from NJ Foundation a CBR partner organization, was given hands on training for one week. One student volunteer from Notre Dame University-USA was trained hands on for one month. Two physiotherapy assistant trainees from CSI Hospital, Madurai observed sessions for one day.

Physiotherapists from the department gave training to different CBR partners and participated in assessment camps.

Mrs. Simy T.A attended 2 day workshop on Creative Movement and expressive arts therapy at Bengaluru, conducted by Creative Movement Therapy Association of India.



Burma Bridge for everyone

Type of aid	Number of items issued
Orthotic Aids	7
Wheel chairs	10
Furniture	8
Other adaptations	12

Students availing physiotherapy	76
Students using adaptations	34
Students using wheel chairs	45
Students using walking aids	14
Students using adapted furniture	92

Some Highlights

Bhuvanatreya, a 10-year-old girl, who has low vision and sensory needs, learned to move around using a rollator.

Hariharan, a 11-year-old boy, had hypersensitivity to touch and managed to acquire a sustaining grasp on the rollator and move about 10-15 steps with assistance.

Sai Reshma, a 6-year-old girl with spastic cerebral palsy learnt to hold and push a rollator and walk around. She enjoyed walking in and around school premises with her friends Darsini and Taha without taking assistance from her teacher or the therapist.

Maria, 3-year-old girl with Olcott Syndrome, learnt to crawl and sit by herself.

Department of Inclusion

Vidya Sagar works towards the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the community. One of the ways we do this is through including children into mainstream schools and colleges.

The Inclusion department continued to work with private schools government schools and colleges.

The activities focused on were:

- *Creating awareness among stakeholders
- * Building the capacity of the teachers
- * Providing support services to students who are included

We have been working with 10 schools and 6 colleges. There was one consultant who covered two schools. Two of the staff went to the other schools once a week.

All students have been coming for review to Vidya Sagar. After the initial orientation, our special educators work with the teachers during their weekly school visits. Support services in academics and therapy, acquiring appropriate assistive devices and scribes have been provided for 56 students in all affiliated institutions.

Five students were included from our Family Based Rehabilitation Program during this academic year. Montfort school, one of the schools that we work with has admitted 4

children, confident that they will receive support from Vidya Sagar.

Extensive work was done with the neighboring Corporation School in Kotturpuram in assessment and program planning in the middle and high school level. The teachers and volunteers were given the programs and have been following up on them. 5th and 8th grade students were aided in acquiring exam taking skills.

I Scribe

Iscribe continues to support students with disability. At present there are around 2000 scribes enrolled in Iscribe. We plan to take this to other metros in the coming year

One student has moved into higher education and is doing his degree in travel and tourism in D.G. Vaishnav College. He completed his higher secondary education taking commerce accountancy, computers and economics as his main subjects. He was admitted into mainstream school at the age of 4. He is one of the very good examples of the success that can be achieved if there is collaboration between teachers, rehabilitation professionals, parents and volunteers in the community.

Rehabilitation Programs were also trained. We also conducted five AAC trainings outside Vidya Sagar.

Orientation Programmes were done for the visitors from SRTC-Chennai, Sankalp-Udaipur, Haryana, Holy Cross-Trichy, and National Institute of Speech and Hearing (NISH, Kerala).

Another important aspect of the department is the development of indigenous devices. For this, we work with IIT Chennai, Anna University and business houses. *Aditi* a non contact switch is being further developed into a cordless movement sensor device. *Awaz*, the portable communication system, is now a downloadable app.

Vision Center

The vision centre works with children and adults with Multiple Disabilities with Visual Impairment (MDVI) with the focus on Functional Vision Assessment, Intervention, Education and Documentation. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Chetana Trust and Vidya Sagar in October 2015 for a year, with the aim to establish a common goal for the Vision Centre and create a structure to guide service development, delivery and identify team goals.

From April 2015 to March 2016, 92 children were assessed for vision issues. These children were from the Advisory & Referral Clinic, Day Centre, and Vision Centre. The assessments helped to detect possible vision issues, understand their visual capacity and hence plan an appropriate intervention program through environmental modification. Through the intervention programme, the child's movement, learning and communication skills are enhanced.

The intervention program was planned under the heading of Infants, Intensive, Direct,

Consultative and Supportive and Monitoring based on the vision severity rating scale. The children who underwent intensive training moved into supportive programs and eventually transferred the requisite skills to the class teachers and parents. The total number of sessions provided was 259.

A new process was followed in the area of documentation. This was based on recommendations to support the use of vision. Areas of modification were environment, select object quality, positioning of the material and the child. The process aims to help parents, teachers, clinical and other rehabilitation practitioners to get useful information about the child's visual ability and progress.

Training with children with visual impairment was conducted for 15 CBR workers and Special Educators from other institutes. Vision centre staff also conducted training for Physiotherapists and Special educators to one of our CBR partners outside Chennai.

The youngest child to come to the vision centre was 4 months old. Leading hospitals such as Sankara Nethralaya, Frontline Hospital, Radhathri Nethralaya, various paediatric neurologists and a few mainstream schools referred children with visual impairment to us.

Apart from Chennai, we also had few children from out of state that accessed our week-long program designed for outstation patients.

Orientation and workshops on working with children with visual impairment was conducted for 15 CBR workers and Special Educators from other institutes. Vision centre staff also conducted training for Physiotherapists and Special educators to one of our CBR partners outside Chennai.

Sagar supports their work with children and adults with development disabilities in 10 Panchayats of Ellapuram block. Vidya Sagar is reaching out to 56 persons with disabilities, with technical skills training and ongoing guidance for two DPO members who are the resource persons for rehabilitation and parent training for this DPO.

c. Michelin CSR:

The CBR Unit has managed to work in 7 panchayats and reach nearly 100 persons with disabilities of Michelin CSR areas which are spread across the Ellapuram and Gummidipoondi blocks of Thiruvallur district. Apart from regular CBR activities, we have also set up two model community disability resource centres at Soolaimeni and Karadiputhur.

d. Slum Project:

This year we also worked in urban slums. The living conditions of persons with disabilities in slums is different and complex. We have started working in three slums around Saidapet, focusing on knowledge dissemination, raising awareness, networking and referrals. We are working with 16 persons with disabilities through this project.

e. Pudhu Vaazhvu Project:

Pudhu Vaazhvu Project is a government project working towards rural development. We are working as a differently-abled resource agency for the Madurantakam block in the Kanchipuram district. Our role is facilitating medications and rehabilitation services for people with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities by increasing the number of community disability



Meeting of a self help group of persons with disabilities

facilitators (grassroot workers) and coordinating with District Mental Health Program. We are reaching about 270 persons with disabilities through this project.

Technical skills support projects

Our major CBR focus is to provide technical support to grassroot organizations that work with disability. We trained 28 staff members of partner organizations through which we indirectly reached 350 persons with developmental disabilities. The organizations and staff trained are from:

1. NJ foundation, Thirukalukundram, Kanchipuram district.
2. Arul Chaandru Special School, Paramakudi, Ramanathapuram district.
3. Sankalp Neuro development centre, Madurai
4. Mahaeswar Parents training centre of children with neurological impairments , Mayavaram,
5. MCDS, Chennai,

Community Based Rehabilitation Program



Identification & Enrollment in villages

Community Based Rehabilitation Program is one of the programs through which Vidya Sagar's services directly reach Persons with Disability (PWD) in rural areas. We partner with various disability and developmental initiatives.

Direct Community Projects

In these projects we work directly by training and guiding community workers. Our focus includes facilitation, health, education (appropriate to age), livelihood and self-advocacy by the formation of Self Help Groups and Disabled Person's Organizations (DPOs).

a. People Welfare and Development Trust:

People Welfare and Development Trust is a development NGO working with women empowerment and disability. It is located in Thiruchuli block of Virudunagar district and their services focus on people living in poor socio-economic conditions. By partnering with the Trust, we reach out to nearly 200 PwDs in their project area.

b. Vasantham (Disabled Person's Organisation DPO):

Vasantham is district-level DPO in the Thiruvallur district, working towards the empowerment of persons with disabilities. Vidya

Human Resource Development



Another form of special education!

The training courses at Vidya Sagar aim at creating skilled professionals. We run a one year Post Graduate Diploma in special Education, Multiple Disabilities (Physical and Neurological) affiliated to the Madras University and recognized by the Rehabilitation Council of India. In 2015-2016 there were 13 students. The Rehabilitation Council of India has asked all organizations running Post Graduate Diploma courses to conduct the two year B.Ed. courses in special education. On request, Vidya Sagar was permitted to do the course for the year 2016-17. We have initiated the process of changing over to the B.Ed. course.

Vidya Sagar also offers the Continuous Rehabilitation education courses recognised by the Rehabilitation Council of India.

This year the topic was “UMOJA - (means unity in swahili) Understanding Sensory Processing Disorders”, conducted by Geraldine Daniel and Nithya Daniel from the Occupational Therapy Department. 30 Rehabilitation professionals from various organisations attended the training.

Short term courses:

Short term courses enhance the skills of the existing professionals by conducting short term courses on specific conditions and issues. Courses are designed to meet the changing needs in the sector. The three month course on “Counselor Education - Disability and Mental Health” certificate course is a pioneering venture for existing and prospective counselors. Eleven Students completed the course this year.

Funding for CBR:

We reached out to people with disabilities through CBR in this year by the funding support of Thomson Reuters, Crowd Funding - Global Giving and Michelin Tyres.



Assessment at Partner Organizations

Trainings conducted:

#	No of days	Topic	Project/ Partner	Number of participants
1	2	Working with psycho social disabilities	Pudhu Vaazhvu Project - Madurantakam block, Kanchipuram dist.	55
2	2	Working with People with intellectual disabilities	Pudhu Vaazhvu Project - Madurantakam block, Kanchipuram dist.	48
3	11	Transdisciplinary Rehab Techniques	People Welfare and Development Trust Chinmaya organization for rural development	5
4	1	Alternate methods of teaching in regular schools	Arul Chaandru Special School	5
5	1	Activities Daily Living	Mother Teresa Trust	16
6	1	Low vision conditions for people with multiplendis disabilities	Sankalp Neurodevelopment therapy centre	19

Disability Legislation Unit

The Disability Legislation Unit (DLU) focuses on issues related to rights of persons with disability. This year the highlight of the work was accessible elections. The department continued to work with the network of activists in the area of financial inclusion, assisted living, rights of women and areas related to higher education

Accessible Election:

S.S. Smitha, Assistant Coordinator, DLU attended the South Asia Disability -Dialogue on Political Participation conducted by International Foundation for Electoral Participation IFES at Colombo, Srilanka from 1st-3rd October 2015. She was a part of the disability activists group in framing recommendations on inclusive & accessible electoral process for persons with disabilities in South Asia which was agreed upon by the Election Commissioners of SAARC countries who took part in the 6th Forum for Election Management bodies of South Asia Conference. FEMBOSA Commissioners signed a resolution to implement the recommendations.

Soon after the conference, DLU started to work on accessible & inclusive Legislative Assembly elections for persons with disabilities in Tamilnadu, held in May 2016.

The department in collaboration with the Disability Rights Alliance took the process forward. The group had several meetings with the officials; designed and printed posters for creating awareness in the community and among persons with disabilities on the importance of persons with disabilities participating in the election process and voting; designed handouts for election officials, giving guidance on interaction with persons with

disabilities during elections; conducted access audits of election booths; created a mobile app to facilitate registration of persons with disabilities; and ensured press coverage. These steps definitely had an impact on participation of persons with disabilities in the election.

DLU conducted a camp for all students of age group 18 and above to get enrolled in electoral rolls towards participating in 2016 Legislative Assembly elections of Tamil Nadu.

The group also put up a stall on accessible & inclusive elections including information hub as well as model accessible polling booth in VaccesS Expo 2016 conducted by Vidya Sagar. .

Banking rights and financial inclusion:

DLU had been working with the Indian Bank's Association towards Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Banking Services and Products. The department was instrumental in IBA constituting 4 working groups for financial inclusion of persons with disabilities. They took part in the meeting held in June apart from being part of the working groups. The department also coordinated with other members from the Disability sector of India to be a part of the IBA meetings.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities bill:

The Disability Legislation unit coordinated a meeting of a small group of persons with disabilities from Disability Rights Alliance with the Law minister Mr.Saddanada Gauda regarding the passage of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill in lines with UNCRPD

Advocacy for persons with psychosocial disabilities:

DLU wrote letters to Mrs. Meneka Gandhi, Minister, Women & Child Welfare and other



A workshop in progress

Training on Inclusive Education was done for the special educators of the Rastriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan in 3 venues. Special educators from all districts of Tamil Nadu attended the training. Jayanthi Narayanan, coordinator family based rehabilitation program, K.S. Uma, coordinator - HRD, Chitra Ravichandran, Gandhimathi and Mohana Sundari, special educators, Day Centre conducted these trainings.

Workshops conducted:

A one week workshop titled “Strategies for developing communication and literacy in students with complex communication needs

(CNN)” was conducted by Elizabeth Torrey, a Speech language pathologist from Perkins International. 23 Rehabilitation professionals from India took part.

A week long parent training on education for children with disabilities was conducted by K.S. Uma at Sankalp , Udaipur.

Paper presentation:

K.S. Uma presented a paper on “Role of Early Intervention towards Inclusive Education” in the International conference on Inclusive Education conducted by the Board of Indian Schools, Muscat at Muscat, Oman.



An experiential learning workshop

In-house Workshops:

Better together - A movement based workshop on working with children with Vision Impairment and Autism Spectrum Disorder (VIASD) - conducted by K.S. Uma and Kalpana Rao for all the staff.

A work shop on Understanding Montessori methods to teach reading and writing was conducted by Chitra Mani and Sunitha, for staff working with young children and for the Heads of Departments of Vidya Sagar

A team from Bridge School USA conducted a week long workshop on various topics related to Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).

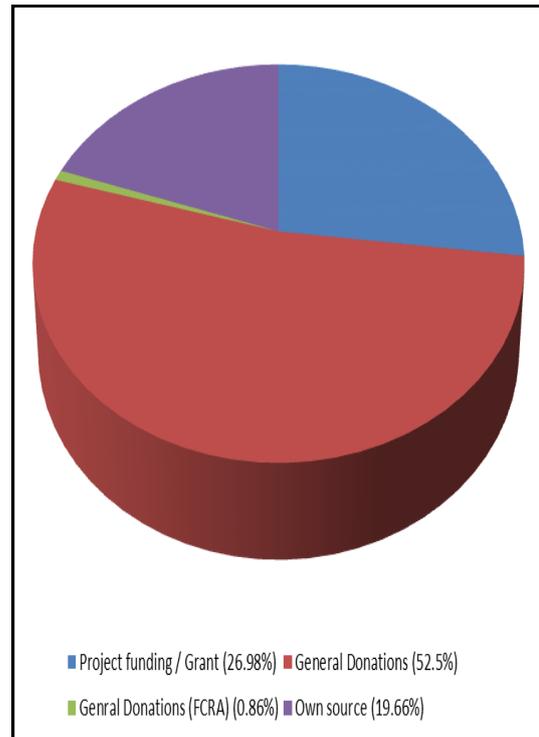
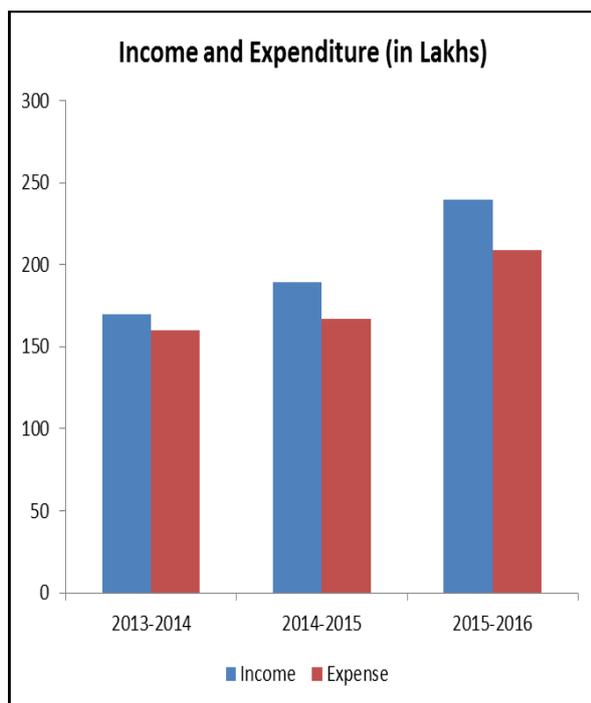
3 special educators attended a Story telling work shop

One special educator and the head of therapy department attended a creative movement workshop in Bangalore.

Fund Raising Management

We believe in ourselves, in our responsibilities, in persistent hard work, in self-determination and always hope for the best. So do our stakeholders, well-wishers, supporters and the community. Even with the devastating floods in Chennai, in spite of deep damage and loss to staff, students, material and place, we were able to get back to normalcy soon with great support from Tata Elxsi. We had to forego our Annual Fundraiser Sadya, last year, due to the floods. A big and heartfelt thank you to all our friends and supporters for being with us in our trying times.

Our corpus has grown to Rs 1.38 crores, with a lot of support from the community and funds



raised through the Airtel Delhi Marathon 2015 and immense support from SQS BFSI India Ltd. We would like to express our thanks to our volunteer and fundraiser Mrs Dwaraka Pandurangi for her continuous effort in supporting Vidya Sagar year after year. This year she bagged the Highest Funds Raiser under the Care Diamond Champion category in Airtel Delhi Marathon 2015.

Major contributors for the year are SQS BFSI India Ltd and Tata Dorabji Trust. Through the CSR initiatives/payroll giving program, Vidya Sagar has got support from the following companies: Deloitte Shared Services India



Youth take part in mock polls by DLU

ministries regarding the right to work of persons with psycho social disabilities, which is a major aspect of legal capacity.

The department facilitated Vidya Sagar to be part of the “**We can work**” campaign initiated by Equals, a *Disabled People’s Organisations (DPO)* when the Minister questioned the capability of persons with psycho social disabilities to work.

RTIs/Affidavits/PILs:

The department Filed RTI on Universities in Tamil Nadu regarding accessible examination systems to be followed based on the guidelines issued by the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and brought out a report. The findings revealed that most Universities / Educational Institutions do not follow the guidelines. DLU is planning to work with the State Commissioner’s Office on this.

Rajiv Rajan filed an affidavit in the Railways PIL case through Ektha, a DPO.

DLU Initiated discussions with a panel of lawyers regarding filing a PIL on Insurance Regulatory Development Authority (IRDA) regarding the

denial of equal rights to persons with disabilities in the Insurance Industry.

Assisted living:

DLU took part in Going Home Collective (transition from institution to community living) discussions held in Delhi & Chennai.

The team was part of conceptualization as well as meetings on Independent living discussions initiated by Vidya Sagar.

Prepared a questionnaire on the requirements for Independent living of adults with disabilities after 2 rounds of discussions with stake holders

Aadhar Camps:

5 half-day camps to register for Aadhar ID card was conducted at Vidya Sagar to register most students and their families to get their Aadhar cards.

Other activities:

Worked out a questionnaire for peer counseling for persons with disabilities after a discussion with Mrs. Poonam Natarajan & Ms.Sivakami.

DLU took part in a survey on most needed assistive devices conducted by WHO, based on the requirements of persons with all disabilities.

DLU Worked on a submission to UN Committee regarding the rights of women with disabilities based on UNCRPD Article 6 - women with disabilities.

TTC students & Counselor course students were oriented on perspectives to disability especially human rights of persons with disabilities and laws concerning persons with disabilities.

Conducted training programs for persons with disabilities in the community at Tiruvallur as part of CBR activities.

Handled Press coverage for all Vidya Sagar activities for the academic year.

V-Access



Hi-Tech equipment available at the stalls

VaccesS, the two-day event on the 2nd and 3rd April, organized by Vidya Sagar and Rotary International and supported by Dream Runners, aims to highlight the significance of accessibility in enhancing ability and changing the quality of life of persons with disability.

The objective of the Expo was to create awareness and showcase the latest products, services, applications and options related to accessibility for a supportive environment.

The entrance, with the accessible tactile map made by IIT Enability, (a company working at accessible assistive devices) welcomed the spectators. The participants then saw the accessible mock polling booth put up by Disability Rights Alliance, (DRA is a collective which includes associations, organizations, and individuals working for the rights of persons with disabilities).

The exhibition showcased various assistive devices ranging from powered wheelchairs specially manufactured by Calladai Motors to accessible software and mobile apps, as well as

communication devices by various companies and students from Anna University and IIT. Low-tech assistive devices and mobility aids by Worth Trust and National Institute for Visually Handicapped attracted a number of spectators.

The inclusive sports by Ramakrishna Mission had inclusive sports and games; Book Share had a stall demonstrating how to access the book share library. Devices which aided day-to-day utility at home and in education were the highlight of other stalls. Added to this were the thought-provoking films shown by Ability Foundation.

‘VaccesS’ aimed at not only creating awareness but also to reiterate the necessity to provide a more accessible and inclusive community. The event highlighted the need for social and attitudinal inclusion. This initiative provided a platform for the participants to experience the enhanced ability through various games and experiences.

In order to create awareness on the need for “Access for All”, an awareness run was organized on 10th April, supported by Dream Runners. This engaging and fun-filled event aimed at creating awareness on the necessity to create an inclusive and barrier-free environment for greater accessibility.

Only through small changes and reasonable accommodations can a big difference be made to enable everyone to function optimally. In the long run, events like these will help us become an inclusive community.

Private Limited., Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation, Club Mahindra, NTT DATA Global Delivery Services Private Ltd, Grundfos Pumps India Pvt. Ltd, Thomson Reuters International Services Private Limited, Michelin India Tamilnadu Tyres Pvt Ltd, KLA Tencor, Absolute Homes, CIOSA, Tata Elxsi, Polaris Banyan Holding Private Limited, SKCL Property Management Services Pvt Ltd, Epi Source and Saraswathi Mills (material contribution).

This is not complete without the individual donations from the community, State Government grants and funds raised through Global Giving (a crowd funding platform). Special thanks to MADRAS MIDTOWN LADIES CIRCLE 7 and MADRAS MIDTOWN ROUND TABLE 42 for being supporting and celebrating with us the Christmas Carnival and our Annual Sports Day.



“Accessible Play Area”, an initiative supported by 5 Rotary Clubs: Rotary Club of Meenambakkam, Rotary Club of Madras East, Rotary Club of Madras Mount, Rotary Club of Chennai Towers and Rotary Club of Chennai, the project was headed by Rotary Club of Meenambakkam.

The Governing Body

Name of the Member	Qualification	Designation in other Organization	Designation in the Board
Ms. Usha Ramakrishnan	Graduate/ Special Educator	Honorary Member Council - Bala Mandir Research Foundation, Hony Executive Committee member - Indian Council for Child Welfare, Tamil Nadu	Chairperson
Mr.Shankaran Nair	B.A (Economics) ; M.B.A	President , Global Servion Solutions	Vice Chairperson
Ms. Anuradha Venkatesh	PGDM (IIM Bangalore)	CEO - Vivitsu Mentoring Academy	Secretary
Mr. S Ramesh	C.A	Chartered Accountant	Treasurer
Ms. Poonam Natarajan	Post Graduate/ Special Educator	Founder vidya Sagar, Former Chairperson- National Trust, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India	Member
Mr. N Gopinath	Business Management	Managing Director- Fluidtherm Technology P Ltd	Member
Ms. Rasheeda Bhagat	M.A -Eng.Lit	Senior Associate Editor and Member - Editorial Management Committee, Business Line (The Hindu)	Member
Mr. Sriram Panchu	Post Graduate (law)	Advocate and Senior Council	Member
Ms. Aarti Arvind	B.Sc, M.B.A	Executive Vice President Thinksoft Global Services Ltd	Member
Dr. Soumya Swaminathan	M.D (Paediatrics)	Director - National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis, Chennai	Member
Mr. G J. Siddharth	B.Com, M.A - Economics	Manager - Trade Services, Operations-Corporate and Global Market operations -IndusInd Bank	Member

Travel Details

International Travel Details

Name	Designation	Purpose and Place	Funded by
Smitha S.S	Assistant Co-ordinator DLU	To attend a conference on South Asia Disability Dialogue on Political Participation - conducted by IFES (International Foundation for Electoral Systems) - at Colombo, Srilanka	IFES
K.S. Uma	Co-ordinator - HRD	To Present a paper on Role of EI towards Inclusive Education at the International Conference on Inclusive Education at Muscat , Oman	Board of Directors, Indian Schools, Muscat

National Travel Details:

Kalpana Rao	Principal - Day Centre	To attend a movement based workshop for senior professionals on VI-ASD in Mumbai	Perkins, Voice and Vision India
K.S. Uma	Co-ordinator - HRD	To attend a movement based workshop for senior professionals on VI-ASD in Mumbai	Perkins, Voice and Vision India
T.A. Simy	Co-ordinator - Physiotherapy	To attend a two day workshop on Creative Movement in Bangalore	Vidya Sagar
Manju Rani Sarkar	Special Educator	To attend a two day workshop on Creative Movement in Bangalore	Vidya Sagar
K.S. Uma	Co-ordinator- HRD	To conduct a one week parent training on Education for children with disabilities , in Sankalp , Udaipur	Sankalp, Udaipur
Smitha S.S	Assistant Co-ordinator - DLU	To attend the ECI Working group meeting on Accessible & Inclusive elections for persons with disabilities - conducted by Election Commission of India in New Delhi.	Election Commission of India
Puspa Priya Ganesh	Special Educator	To attend a two day workshop on Literacy skills for pre - school children conducted by the Spastic Society of Karnataka in Bangalore	Vidya Sagar
Chitrlekha R	Special Educator	To attend a two day workshop on Literacy skills for pre - school children conducted by the Spastic Society of Karnataka in Bangalore	Vidya Sagar

Bank Details

Vidya Sagar (formerly, The Spastics Society of India)

Address: # 1, Ranjith Road, Kotturpuram, Chennai -600 085

Phone: 044 22354784/85/4980

Fax : 044 22200533

Email id: vidyasagar.resources@gmail.com; accounts@vidyasagar.co.in

Registered under Act 27, Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act R.No.467 of 1998

Founder: Ms. Poonam Natarajan

Chairperson: Ms. Usha Ramakrishnan

Director: Ms. Rajul Padmanabhan

Phone: 044 - 22353757

Email : director@vidyasagar.co.in

Donations are exempt under 80G of the IT Act

Registered u/s 12A application no DIT € No.2 (374)98-99

Name of Bank	State Bank of Mysore	HDFC BANK LTD	HDFCBANK LTD
Type of account	Saving Account	Saving Account	Foreign contribution account
Saving account number	A/c no. 54028105944	A/c 13051450000068	A/c 50100022443481
IFSC code	SBMY0040169	HDFC 0001305	HDFC 0001305
Address	State Bank of Mysore No:14, North Usman Road, T. Nagar, Chennai - 600017	HDFC Bank Ltd No:46, Gandhi Mandapam Road Kotturpuram Chennai - 600 085	HDFC Bank Ltd No:46, Gandhi Mandapam Road Kotturpuram Chennai - 600 085
Phone number	044 - 28340121	044 - 30751912	044 - 30751912
			FCRA regn no. 075300693 13 th Jan- 2000
			Swift - HDFC INBB
			Pan no: AAATV2359M

The General Body

Name of the Members	Qualification	Designation in other Organization	Designation in the Board
Ms. Seetha Rathnakar	Graduate/Media	Former Asst. Station Director-Doordarshan Kendra, Freelance Film Director	Member
Ms. Preeti Mehra	B.A (Hons) English	Associate Editor at THE HINDU	Member
Ms. Kalpana Rao	Graduate	Principal-Day Centre, Vidya Sagar	Member
Mr. Rajiv Rajan	Post Graduate	Co-ordinator -Disability Legislation Unit, Vidya Sagar Board member-Asia Pacific Disabled Peoples Organization United	Member
Ms. V Suguna	Physiotherapist	Senior staff and Coordinator-Adult Leisure Unit, Vidya Sagar	Member
Ms. Prabha Sekar	B.Sc (H.Sc) PG Dip (Comp Education), PG Dip in Journalism and Mass. Comm.	Volunteer - Parent of a child with disability	Member
Ms. Mallika Ganapathy	Graduate-Special Educator	Consultant	Member
Ms. Dipti Bhatia	M.Phil	Dy. Director, Vidya Sagar Honorary Secretary - National Association for the Blind	Member
Ms. Namitha Jacob	Ph.D	Education Specialist-Perkins International, Asia Pacific Region Programme Director- 'Chetna'	Member
Ms. Dwaraka Pandurangi	M.Com	Volunteer (Fundraising)	Member
Mrs. Rajul Padmanabhan	Post Graduate Special Educator	Director - Vidya Sagar	Member

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS	ASSOCIATE COORDINATOR DLU	ACCOUNTANTS
SUMITHRA K	SMITHA S.S	CHITRA KRISHNAN
	SYSTEM INCHARGE	DHANASEKAR R - ASSISTANT
	BALAJI R	MUZAMIL A.S - ASSISTANT
LIBRARIAN	ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN	RECEPTIONIST
RAJALAKSHMI R	KANTHIMATHI	PRABHAKARAN
SECRETARIES	OFFICE ASSISTANTS	DRIVERS
JOSEPHINE GABRIAL	NIRMAL KUMAR	KANNAN
RAMA DEVI	PACHAIYAPPAN	ANTONY RAJ
SHANTHI R	SUNARA K.P	
		ASSISTANTS
CARPENTER	WHEEL CHAIR MAINTENANCE	JANAKIRAMAN
MURALI	MUSTAFA	SHIVARAM
		VIDYA
SUPPORT STAFF		
ALAMELU	ANJALI	BANUMATHI S
CHINNAMMA K	DHEEPA K	GIRIJA V
GNANAM	INDIRANI P	JAYA D
KOKILA E	KUPPULAKSHMI	MARIAMMAL M
MENAKA C	MUMTAJ	NIRMALA S
RADHA K	RAJESWARI D	RAJESWARI V
RANI S	SARASWATHY	SELVI M
SHANTHI A	SHANTHI G	SHANTHI S
VASANTHI M		

Staff List

RAJUL PADMANABHAN	DIRECTOR	
DIPTI BHATIA	DEPUTY DIRECTOR	
RADHA MURALIDHARAN	ACCOUNTS OFFICER	
KALPANA	PRINCIPAL DAY CENTRE	
VIJAYASHREE RAMESH	COORDINATOR EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT CENTRE	
JAYANTHI NARAYANAN	COORDINATOR FAMILY BASED REHABILITATION	
UMA K.S	COORDINATOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT	
RAJEEV RAJAN	COORDINATOR DISABILITY LEGISLATION UNIT	
SIMY TA	COORDINATOR PHYSIOTHERAPY	
NAVAMANI	COORDINATOR COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION	
SUGUNA V	COORDINATOR ADULT LEISURE PROGRAMME	
ANURADHA SANKARAN	COORDINATOR (YOUTH PROGRAM)	
ASHA NEDUNGADI	ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER	
KAVITHA YESHWIN KUMAR	PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER	
SPECIAL EDUCATORS		
AARABHI BADRI	ANU ALEX	CHITRALEKHA B
CHITRA RAVICHANDRAN	DEEPIKA SANTHANA KRISHNAN	GANDHIMATHI
JAYALAKSHMI S	JEEVA M	KRITHIKA V
LAKSHMI BALASUBRAMANIAN	MANJU RANI SARKAR	MINOTI SEN
MOHANA SUNDARI	PUSHPAPRIYA	RABECCAL
RAMU K	SASIKALA D	SHASIKALA R
SMITHA PADMANABHAN	SUJATHA CHELLATHURAI	UMA NARAYANAN
VALLIAMMAL	VICTORIA H	
VOCATIONAL TRAINERS	PHYSIOTHERAPISTS	SOCIAL WORKERS
AMIRTHARAJ I	MAHALAKSHMI V	SANTHOSH KUMAR M
BALA VINAYAGAM STALIN	VIJAYALAKSHMI	JENNIFER FATOGUN - DLU
JAYANTHI V	JEFFERSON RAJ LECKLER	
VIMALA T.A	HEMALATHA R	TEACHERS
	GAJENDRAKUMAR	MEENA D - ART
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS	PAUL ROBINSON	SHALIMA
NITHYA JEBARAJ	NIRMALA M	VAIDEKI - ASSISTANT
SARITA KAMBLE	SHANTHI R	HARKRISHNAN- SPORTS

STATEMENT OF PARTICULARS

I) APPLICATION OF INCOME FOR CHARITABLE OR RELIGIOUS PURPOSES

	Rs.
1. Amount of income of the previous year applied to Charitable or religious purposes in India during the year.	2,08,56,055
2. Whether the trust/Institution has exercised the option under clause (2) of the EXPLANATION to section 11 (1). If so, the details of the amount of income deemed to have been applied to charitable or religious purposes in India during the previous year.	No
3. Amount of Income accumulated or set apart/ finally set apart for application to charitable religious purposes, to the extent it does not exceed 15% of the income derived from property held under trust wholly / in part only for such purposes.	35,93,384
4. Amount of income eligible for exemption under section 11(1)(c) give details.	N.A.
5. Amount of income, in addition to the amount referred to in item 3 above, accumulated or set apart for specified purposes under section 11(2).	NIL
6. Whether the amount of income mentioned in Item 5 above has been invested or deposited in the manner laid down under in section 11(2)(b)? If so the details thereof.	NO
7. Whether any part of the income in respect of which an option was exercised under clause (2) of the EXPLANATION to section 11(1) in any earlier year under section 11(1B)? If so, the details thereof.	NO
8. Whether, during the previous year, any part of income accumulated or set apart for specified purposes under section 11(2) in any earlier years.	NO
a) Has been applied for purposes other than Charitable or religious purposes or has ceased to be accumulated or set apart for application thereto, or	NO
b) has ceased to remain invested in any security referred to in section 11(2)(b)(i) or deposited in any account referred to in 11(2)(b)(iii), or	NIL



III. INVESTMENTS HELD AT ANY TIME DURING THE PREVIOUS YEAR(S) IN CONCERNS IN WHICH PERSONS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 13 (3) HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST.

S. No. (1)	Name and address of the concern (2)	Where the concern is a company No. of class if shares held (3)
Total ----- NIL -----		

Nominal Value of the Investment (4)	Income from the Investment (5)	Where the amount of Col 4 exceed 5% of the capital of the concern during the previous year - say Yes/No (6)
Total ----- NIL -----		

PLACE: CHENNAI

DATE: 19/09/16

For SANKARAN & KRISHNAN
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Balachandra
M. Balachandra
PARTNER



- c) has not been utilized for purposes for which it was accumulated or set apart during the period for which it was to be accumulated or set apart, or in the year immediately following the thereof? If so, details thereof. NIL

II) APPLICATION OR USE OF INCOME OR PROPERTY FOR THE BENEFIT OF PERSONS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 13(3)

1. Whether any part of the income or property of the Trust/Institution was lent, or continues to be lent, in the previous year to any person referred to in the Annexure as such person? If so, give details of the amount, rate of interest charged and the nature of security, if any. NIL
2. Whether any land, building or other property of the trust/Institution was made or continued to be made, available for the use of any such person during the previous year? If so, give details of the property and the amount of rent or compensation charged, if any. NIL
3. Whether any payment was made to any such person during the previous year by way of salary, allowances, or otherwise? If so, give details. NIL
4. Whether the services of the Trust/Institution were made available to any such person during the previous year? If so, give details thereof together with remunerate or compensation received, if any. NIL
5. Whether any share security or other property was purchased or on behalf of the Trust/Institution during the previous year from any such person? If so, give details thereof together with the consideration paid. NIL
6. Whether any share, security or other property was sold by or on behalf of the Trust/Institution during the previous year to any such person? If so, give details thereof together with consideration received. NIL
7. Whether any income or property of the trust/ Institution was diverted in the previous year in favour of any such person? If so, give details thereof together with the amount of income or value of property so diverted. NIL
8. Whether the income or property of the trust/ Institution was used or applied during the previous year for the benefit of any such person in any other manner? If so, give details. NIL



VIDYA SAGAR
 No. 1, Ranjit Road, Kotturpuram, Chennai - 600 085
INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH -2016

DESCRIPTION	31.3.2016	2015	DESCRIPTION	31.3.2016	2015
Expenditure	TOTAL	TOTAL	Income	TOTAL	TOTAL
Aids & Appliances	184,728.00	137,276.00	Assesment Fund	98,625.00	133,100.00
Annual Maintenance Contract	175,621.00	168,073.86	Application Fee & Registration Fee	1,500.00	1,800.00
Annual Day Expenses	-	253,630.00	Course Tution Fees	319,030.00	266,000.00
Audit Fees	13,696.00	1,123.00	Donation Fund	12,578,013.88	7,324,262.60
Bank charges	19,458.98	9,371.14	Donation Fund (Foreign)	206,340.50	1,269,671.00
Books & Periodicals	8,380.00	8,289.00	Donation Fund (Sadya)	-	2,025,000.00
Computer Consumables	28,841.00	-	Vocational Training Income	69,309.00	-
Consultation Charges	589,883.00	345,510.00	Grant in aid - Deloitte	224,764.00	-
Building - Repairs	276,188.00	-	Grant in aid - Hilton	15,200.00	-
Conveyance & Travelling	316,383.00	298,627.00	Grant in aid - NTT Data	90,800.00	-
Depreciation	1,057,331.00	1,227,733.00	Grant in aid - Thomson Reuters	446,272.00	-
Electricity	330,562.00	310,082.00	Grant in aid - ERSF	854,231.46	445,488.50
Event Expenses	47,681.00	106,523.00	Grant in aid - Michelin	495,981.00	462,000.00
Gratuity	315,616.00	236,712.00	Grant in aid - Global Giving	333,423.00	317,500.00
Honorarium	75,725.00	54,200.00	Grant in aid - State Commissioner	240,000.00	-
Internet charges	50,779.00	49,648.00	Grant in aid - TET	3,761,739.00	3,830,128.00
Library books	37,426.00	-	Greeting Cards	-	1,540.00
Kalakal Café	49,003.00	-	Interest	994,979.34	520,611.19
Land Expenses	23,425.00	-	Mobility Fund	979,005.00	792,478.00
Lift Insurance	2,841.00	-	Misc. Income	52,623.00	62,441.00
Maintenance Building	338,750.00	322,147.00	Profit on sale of Vehicle	-	61,446.00
Maintenance Garden	-	48,000.00	Rent Received	415,895.00	332,300.00
Maintenance & Repairs	386,923.00	652,116.50	Technical Fee	506,940.00	692,851.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	5,602.00	9,603.50	Tuition Fund	1,271,225.00	1,190,500.00
PF Administrative Expenses	102,606.00	123,034.00			
Provident Fund	819,041.00	701,894.00			
Postage	30,654.00	29,112.00			
Printing & Stationery	161,481.00	144,634.50			
Raw Material	76,200.00	64,393.00			
Rent	160,000.00	146,849.00			
Registration fees	98,000.00	22,700.00			
Maintenance-machines	52,045.00	244,133.00			
Salaries	12,359,923.00	11,021,794.00			
Security Charges	259,773.00	229,212.00			
Seminars & Workshop	76,585.00	29,103.00			
Staff Conveyance	318,780.00	110,655.00			
Staff Welfare	285,732.00	303,374.00			
Student Welfare	59,276.00	71,292.00			
Student Conveyance	955,490.00	890,274.00			
Student Stipend	91,489.00	-			
Student Medicals	68,654.00	47,612.00			
Subscription & Membership	13,350.00	24,901.00			
Fixed assets written off	9,767.00	-			
DS Expenses	23,908.00	-			
Teaching Aids	65,888.00	166,818.00			
Technical Fee	61,720.00	-			
Telephone Charges	79,064.00	-			
Fund Raising Expenses	-	75,663.00			
Access	38,910.00	-			
Vocational Training Expenses	-	4,504.00			
Vehicle Expenses	219,291.00	145,849.00			
Water & Sewerage Tax	33,585.00	67,558.00			
Surplus	3,099,841.20	825,093.91			
TOTAL	23,955,896.18	19,729,117.41	TOTAL	23,955,896.18	19,729,117.41

For VIDYA SAGAR
Rajul Padmanabhan
 RAJUL PADMANABHAN
 Director

For VIDYA SAGAR
Ushakamal
 USHA RAMAKRISHNAN
 Chairperson

For VIDYA SAGAR For S. RAMAKRISHNAN A. KRISHNAN

S. Ramesh
 S. RAMESH
 Treasurer



Balachandran
 BALACHANDRAN
 M.No : 16271

VIDYA SAGAR
No. 1, Ranjit Road, Kotturpuram, Chennai - 600 085
BALANCE SHEET AS ON 31ST MARCH - 2016

LIABILITIES	Rs. P.	ASSETS	Rs. P.
Trust / General Fund (Schedule A)	14,241,949.70	Fixed Assets (Schedule E)	26,505,289.00
Depreciation Reserve Fund (Schedule B)	19,831,925.00	Investments (Schedule F)	13,728,780.00
Donation Fund (Corpus)	7,395,001.00	Receivables (Schedule G)	624,904.65
Donation (Earmarked)	3,315,751.00		
Endowment Fund (SQS)	6,412,850.00	Grant Michelin	
Donation (Assets)	1,681,046.00		
1. Grant in Aid - Handicap International	13,592.99	Current Assets	
2. Grant in Aid - Hilton perkins	419,242.91	<u>Cash in hand</u>	103,314.00
3. Grant in Aid - Global CBR	267,281.07		
4. Grant in Aid - Tata Trust	3,507,065.00	<u>Cash at Bank</u>	20,341,894.51
5. Grant in Aid - Global - E.I	267,712.54	(Schedule H)	
6. Sri Sarvatma Natarajan Trust	169,900.95		
7. National Award	56,144.00		
8. Award - Alliance Resource	140,000.00		
9. Grant - Deliotte	1,035,737.00		
10. Grant - Flood relief (Tata)	802,568.00		
11. Grant - SQS (Bldg Repair)	89,591.00		
12. Grant - SQS (Equipments)	235,000.00		
13. Grant in Aid -Thomson Reuters	547,417.00		
14. Grant in Aid - Michelin	372,136.00		
15. Grant in Aid - NDDT	98,108.00		
Liabilities & Provisions (Schedule D)	404,163.00		
TOTAL	61,304,182.16	TOTAL	61,304,182.16

For VIDYA SAGAR

Rajul Padmanabhan
RAJUL PADMANABHAN
Director

For VIDYA SAGAR

S. Ramesh
S. RAMESH
Treasurer

For SANKARAN A KRISHNIA
Chartered Accountants
FAN 0065023



M. Balachandran
M. BALACHANDRAN
M.No : 16271

For VIDYA SAGAR

Usha Ramakrishnan
USHA RAMAKRISHNAN
Chairperson

Accessibility for disabled, a major issue at MRTS stations

Zubeda Hamid and R. Srikanth

CHENNAI: As part of measures to improve accessibility for the disabled, ramps are being spruced up, and pedestrian-friendly tiles laid, at the Mass Rapid Transit Railway System (MRTS) station at Light House. A ramp is also being constructed at the Velachery station.



Facilities for the disabled are being installed at the Light House MRTS station — PHOTO: M. KARUNAKARAN

However, the larger issue of non-functional lifts and escalators continue to plague MRTS stations. These stations are difficult to access, badly maintained and very disabled unfriendly, say those who have travelled by the trains.

“At many stations the lifts do not work. Maintenance is also poor,” said M. Mani, who is visually impaired.

The stations are barely accessible, and the trains too are not disabled friendly, said K. Gopinath, State general secretary, Tamil Nadu Udayikkaram Association for the Welfare of the Differently Aabled. “The flooring is also not good. We use the service only when we are forced to,” he said.

R. Shanthi, whose son has low vision, said she had found travelling by the MRTS extremely difficult. “Many a time, during night journeys by the MRTS, we have found stations where the lifts do not work, to be lacking in lighting arrangements too. There would be no lights on the staircase. Many of the steps are also broken, making it difficult for my son. And then, when the train is crowded, entraining is difficult,” she said.

Another glaring problem is the poor accessibility to the

emergency exits. There is no training for the staff on how to deal with people with disabilities, said disability rights activist Rajiv Rajan.

“Access is not only about ramps. There are many other aspects to it, which the MRTS stations lack,” he said.

Denying that suburban railway stations lacked facilities for the differently-abled, a senior official of the Southern Railway said that except for a few stations, escalators and lifts have been repaired and are operating properly.

When Kanna Panna scored big

Despite sweltering heat made worse by a power cut, a crowd had gathered for a book launch at Vidya Sagar, on Tuesday. Author Zai Whitaker, launching her new children's book *Kanna Panna*, said that even in the book, there was a power shutdown but it had no impact on the character Kanna, a visually challenged boy.

Even Grand Master Vishwanathan Anand was found wiping his brows. However, no sooner did storyteller Jeeva begin convincing the children to sing along *Kanna O Kanna* with her, that the power returned!

The chatterbox, Kanna, is a boy who, when asked for his name by a teacher, says Kanna Panna. This book is about how people, including parents, don't understand the physically challenged and how they try to help them in ways that only cause more psychological pain. The plot revolves around a visit to a temple with his relatives. When the power goes off, Kanna is seen guiding everyone out.

In conversation with *City Express*, Zai said, “I wanted a plot that would give him an opportunity to show that he can also do something useful and not just be a visually challenged boy sitting around and being helped by everyone. Initially, I thought of some exotic adventure like trekking or white water rafting - which for some reason is always in my mind - but then I realised that day-to-day life can bring those opportunities as well. I made him go on a temple trip with his uncle and aunt where the lights go off. That



is pretty mundane yet adventurous,”

Much to the delight of the children from Vidya Sagar, AMM and Akshar Arbol, storyteller Jeeva won their hearts by her hilarious methods of narrating the story. Not only did she get them to laugh and sing but she brought out the dynamic character of Kanna making it easier for everyone to connect with.

“The book has illustrations and we paint those pictures with words. We bring out the major part of the book but we do add a little colour to it. This storytelling session was easier for me because I was the one who translated the book in Tamil,” said Jeeva, who has been a storyteller for 18 years.

Yes, the book has been translated into nine languages with the help of freelancers. They are now available in English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali and Malayalam. A paperback copy, an audio book and a braile copy was launched by Vishwanathan Anand who also happens to be the brand ambassador of VidyaSagar.

While Vishwanathan was asked deep questions by the students about his attitude towards success and failure and why he chose chess, Zai answered insightful questions about the book's plot and characters.

It costs ₹135 and is available at online portals like Flipkart, Amazon and Tulika.

Audit of election booths will allow disabled to vote

Divya.Chandrababu @timesgroup.com

Chennai: Ahead of National Voter's Day on Monday, NGOs and activists working for rights of the disabled on Sunday presented a 12-point charter to make election booths accessible for voters with physical, visual and hearing impairment.

Chief electoral officer Rajesh Lakhoni said he is taking steps to make sure disabilities do not restrict voters — a subject that the Madras high court has repeatedly asked the authorities to address. “We have been working with the election department for the past six months because political participation is imperati-

ve,” Disability Rights Alliance member Smitha Sadasivan said. “This year we aim to rope in disabled people from institutions who are largely left out of the process.” NGOs along with the chief electoral officer will carry out an accessibility audit of 3,500 polling booths in Chennai.

“We have started an audit of available ramps in buildings and if these ramps can be used,” Lakhoni said. “We are now working on signage, trying to make our website more accessible and looking at methods to remove all physical and other barriers to ensure an inclusive election. The website will be the first of its kind in the election department.”

The election commission has started door-to-door collection of applications for inclusion on the electoral rolls begun and has so far collected 20,000 applications from new voters with disabilities.

“A video will be circulated to all polling officers with instructions on how to help people without making them feel disabled,” Lakhoni said. Ability Foundation create a 30-second film to raise awareness among the differently-abled and ask them to exercise their franchise. The Madras high court has pulled up the state departments several times for not making government departments' disabled-friendly.

DOUBLE WHAMMY



Actor Arvind Swami (left) and chess Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand (second from left) interact with special children at Vidya Sagar Foundation in Chennai on Wednesday

Needed: Adept scribes so blind can ace tests

Vinayashree Jagadeesh | TNN

Chennai: During her first stab at the civil services exam, visually challenged Beno Zephine had to ask the scribe assisting her to check the correct spelling of 'public administration' by referring to the hall ticket as the scribe didn't know the spelling.

Beno was both annoyed and dismayed because the paper she was going to write was on the topic.

She realised that for her to crack a competitive examination, like she knew she could, she had to get a good scribe.

"There obviously is a difference when I write an exam

and when someone else writes it for me," Beno, the first completely blind person to become an IAS officer told TOI in an earlier interaction before she joined service. "The scribe's competency is crucial. There should be a mechanism to ensure that officials appoint capable scribes."

Educators say officials often select scribes at the last minute, compromising on competency. This can greatly impact the performance of the person taking the exam because in competitive tests every mark counts.

Vidyasagar Foundation deputy director Dipti Bhatia, who appoints scribes for



examinations, says officials in many cases appoint scribes at random without considering the needs of the exam-taker.

Visually impaired herself, Bhatia recalls that she lost out on a rank in a public exam because her scribe was less than competent.

"Some command over the test subject is a basic criterion. For example, a scribe for a banking exam must know

the basic formulas," she said. Scribe Vidya Raju says sometimes visually impaired candidates aren't able to clearly communicate what they want to say.

"Knowing the jargon required is crucial," she said. "There aren't enough scribes so it's not easy to find scribes who have an educational background related to the exam topic all the time. It's the scribe's responsibility to brush up on the subject matter."

In competitive exams it's often the case that the scribe and the candidate meet in the exam hall for the first time. Bhatia says a 20-minute interaction between the two before

the exam could help the scribe understand candidate's needs.

Other factors are good reading and writing skills. Experts say if the test-taker is unable to grasp the meaning of a question due to a scribe's poor reading skills it could result in a lot of wasted time. Fast writing is essential as students may lose out on time.

This, however, is less of an issue when it comes to school and college exams. Many institutions say they appoint scribes through agencies that verify their qualifications.

If students cannot speak clearly, scribes interact with them to understand the assistance they require.

Kattai Koothu Helps Train Vidyasagar Kids

With dance and basketball practice for their recently concluded sports day, kids are showing improvement

Amrutha Varshini



A 14-year-old clad in white is wriggling with excitement. Hani, as he is called, had an exciting day ahead. He would be performing a dance on stage for the first time. The group of kids around him sit still for a round of light make-up, while a few experienced hands dab white and red on their waiting foreheads.

On Tuesday, Vidyasagar school for special kids celebrated its annual sports day. From sack race to wheelchair racing, the 150 kids on the premises were beaming while clutching medals and certificates in their hands.

"They love sports, and the fact that it was an inter-house event made

them even more excited," says Rajal Padmanabhan, director of the institution.

But this year, something special was in store for the kids and the spectators — a group of 12 children with a dance group performed 'Kattai Koothu'. The children had been practising for over six months.

It is a sort of kinaesthetic (tactile) training for them, says principal Kalpana Rao. "There has been a marked improvement in their march past, drills and even recollection since they started practice. We have also been giving them basketball training since last year," she says. The dancers are ready by now, and Hani suddenly remembers he has other duties to attend to. "Vote of thanks," he says, to his principal before scurrying off to practice his speech. "He wouldn't have remembered this last year, but now this training has made him better at multitasking. We want to give more of this exposure," says Kalpana.

'Ensure Govt Buildings Are Diffabled-friendly'

Express News Service

Chennai: Madras High Court has directed the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities to hold a meeting within 10 days to ensure government buildings are disabled friendly.

The first bench of Chief Justice S K Kaul and Justice Pushpa Sathyanaraya gave the direction, while passing further interim orders on two PILs, one from Rajiv Rajan and the other from M Gnana Sambandan, on Monday.

While Rajiv Rajan prayed for a direction to the authorities, more particularly the CMD of MTC (Chennai) and the Commissioner of Corporation of Chennai, to implement the Persons with Disabilities Act 1951 in its letter and spirit by providing disabled friendly buses and barrier free environment in public places, the other one from Sambandan wanted the au-

thorities to frame and notify comprehensive rules for according recognition to various types of educational institutions for disabled.

When the matter came up on Monday, the Centre placed on record a note containing the additional facilities included in the Barrier Free and Accessibility Act, 2014. The requirement is to ensure that the Central PWD norms are adhered to and observe how best they could be implemented in different buildings owned by the government.

The bench observed that necessary exercise should be undertaken by the Commissioner for Disabilities in consultation with the CPWD and the State PWD, which should also bring the same norms, and the amicus curie, advocate T Mohan, so that it could have a clear plan of action to what extent the different buildings could be made disabled friendly.

Course on special needs counselling

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI: Vidya Sagar proposes to offer a two-month training programme on special needs counselling. 'Counsellor Education — Disability and Mental Health' from February 27 to April 30.

The programme is aimed at preparing counsellors, psychologists and social workers to perform a vital role in the vocational, educational and personal adjustment of persons with physical, mental and emotional disabilities.

Course outlines for the programme have been drawn up and developed by experts in the fields of both disabilities and counselling. This programme will be held at Vidya Sagar, Kotturpuram, Chennai.

Applications from practitioners and students in the field of psychology, psychiatry, counselling and social work are invited. The sessions will be conducted two days in a week, on Fridays (9 p.m. - 7 p.m.) and Saturdays (4 a.m. - 4 p.m.) and will involve both theory and practical sessions.

Applications will be available at Vidya Sagar, Kotturpuram, on any week day, from 9.30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The forms have to be filled in and returned by February 22. The course fees is Rs. 5,000.

For more details, contact Shirin Mammen at 9789040184 or email hrd@vidyasagar.co.in/ director@vidyasagar.co.in



Celebrating Three Decades of Able Service

It was a touching reunion and display of talent, when alumni and students of Vidya Sagar came together to toast the school in Kotturpuram, which has completed 30 years of service to the diff-abled

Express News Service

Chennai: It was in the year 1985 when Poonam Natarajan, mother of a child with disability began Vidya Sagar School for the Differently Abled. Formerly known as the Spastics Society of India, celebrated its thirtieth anniversary on

Sunday. The school premises was buzzing with young children who were busy either getting clicked with funny costumes or playing games. There was laughter and gaiety all over. "It is a wonderful feeling to see our students and alumni come and take part in this function. It seems like nothing has

changed, everything still seems as fresh and effervescent as it did before," said Kalpana Rao, Principal of Vidya Sagar school.

The school also launched its new alumni website — Vidya Sagar Alumni, where all the pass outs from the institution have posted their real life stories. "Here they

have written about how multiple organ failures or disability did not deter them from moving ahead in life. This is something we all need to learn," said the Principal.

"We could only upload 60 of them now, as the space was limited. But we will be enlarging it very soon," she added. Arabi, a

teacher from the school performed Bharatanatyam dance with students Nagamanjari and Gangadharan. Their performance received a thunderous applause from the audience. The event ended with a traditional cake cutting ceremony. "I wish them all the very best in the years to come," said a parent.



VIDYA SAGAR
(Formerly 'The Saastics Society of India, Chennai')



VIDYA SAGAR

1, Ranjit Road, Kotturpuram, Chennai - 600 085
Board : 044 2235 4784/85, Telefax : 044 22200533
e-mail : director@vidyasagar.co.in
website : www.vidyasagar.co.in