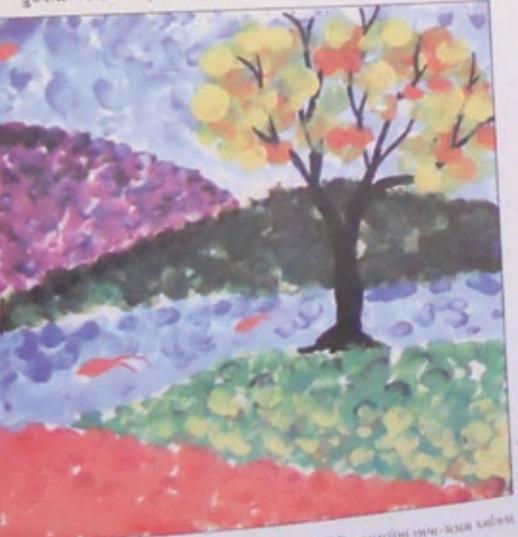


Janhiti

Raj Saubhag Ashram Humanitarian Magazine: Issue 2



કુદરતી દશ્યચિત્ર (કિંગર પ્રિન્ટ)



આ પોલી, તેનાથી જન્મવું કુદરતી દશ્યચિત્ર આપવામાં આવ્યું છે. કિંગર પ્રિન્ટમાં આપા-જનક સહિતનાં બધાં અંગનાં સહી.



આ પોલી, તેનાથી જન્મવું કુદરતી દશ્યચિત્ર આપવામાં આવ્યું છે. કિંગર પ્રિન્ટમાં આપા-જનક સહિતનાં બધાં અંગનાં સહી.



Welcome



My dear compassionate friends, welcome to this humanitarian magazine from Raj Saubhag Ashram. My regards and respect to all of you who have experienced the joy of giving.

In this world we find God in those who are suffering.

Sharing the glow of your hearts and the smile of your faces, we are reaching out to as many poor, unfortunate and deprived souls as possible, helping them in their pain and suffering.

Nobody can do everything, but everybody can do something. Your enthusiasm to help and our determination to reach out has jointly made a tremendous difference in the lives of many.

The greatest good takes place when philanthropy and philosophy walk hand in hand, as one shares the riches, and the other reveals our own inner riches. I thank you all for your support. In partnership we shall continue doing the good work.

Nalin Kothari

Being God's living expression of Kindness.

Humanity has survived by the love, kindness, care, concern and compassion that we share for each other and also towards all living beings that coexist with us.

Born as humans we are the most empowered of souls. Yet despite being so intellectually privileged we are not born free. Like all other living entities we too have to endure the fruition of our past karmas.

Pain, illness, disability, hunger, poverty and death are sufferings related to the body. Grief, hatred, frustration, guilt, humiliation, loneliness and anxiety are a few attributed to the mind.

In such miserable conditions we find many people getting defeated. We are also amazed to see a few who endure it with perfect equanimity.

Spirituality plays a significant role in developing our mindset and cultivating an attitude to balance and even wipe out the harsh influence of such afflictions. Pain is inevitable but suffering can be optional. Suffering is only because we are attached to what is passing by. Thus it is essential that philosophy should drive philanthropy.

Being consciously aware and sensitive to the sufferings of all living beings will surely motivate charity and inspire us to live a life for public service. An inner urge to spread love and to secure happiness and well being for all is the religion of humanity that we must all follow.

Under Bhaishree's benevolence and heartfelt concern, we at Shree Raj Saubhag Satsang Mandal, Sayla have resolved to do our best in helping the needy, poor and pained.

Bhaishree often says that suffering can lead us to many realisations. It helps us to understand the purpose of this human life and if we work hard it would then open the door to transcendence.

It is your generosity and big heartedness that enables us to make some difference in the lives of so many souls. We welcome you to join our collective efforts in being God's living expression of kindness.

In humbleness and gratitude,

Minal Shah
Vikram Shah

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Janhit

Issue 2

In the past few years the humanitarian activities undertaken by Shree Raj Saubhag have flourished under the selfless drive and guidance of Param Pujya Bhaishree, Shree Nalinbhai Kothari.

So many have been inspired to contribute to the work being done and there is so much to celebrate and be grateful for. In this magazine we take you through the journey of our achievements and thank you for your selfless support.

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Background

From humble beginnings

A brief background into the humanitarian activities of Shree Raj Saubhag Ashram

The late Param Pujya Ladakchand Manekchand Vora, fondly known as Bapuji, inspired the Ashram's ethos of DEVOTION, WISDOM and SELFLESS SERVICE.

Shree Raj Saubhag Satsang Mandal is a spiritual organisation with its Ashram located in Sayla, Gujarat, a village and district rich in spiritual history. The Ashram was established by Param Pujya Bapuji in 1976.

Having grown up in Sayla, Bapuji was conscious of the suffering of the local population with the Sayla district being one of the most deprived areas of Gujarat. It is an arid area with limited rainfall, a rocky topography and limited farming activity. Employment opportunities are very slim and most of the population are classified as below the poverty line. Literacy rates (particularly female literacy rates) are amongst the lowest in Gujarat.

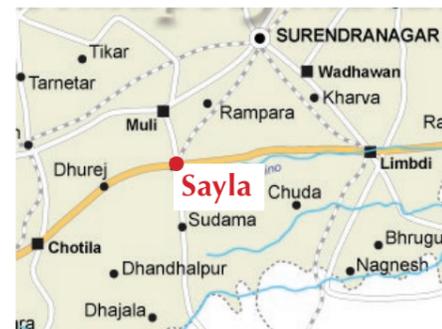
Bapuji emphasised cultivating the quality of compassion in all his disciples and inspired Ashram members to look out for the welfare and needs of others whilst pursuing personal spiritual goals.

'JAN SEVA TE PRABHU SEVA'
(*'SERVICE TO HUMANITY IS SERVICE TO GOD'*)
- Param Pujya Bapuji

He initiated various social welfare programs starting with the distribution of clothes and grains to the needy, and buttermilk centres during the harsh summer periods. In 1987, the first eye

camp was held in the Ashram itself. Over the past 35 years, the social welfare and development programmes have grown with projects in education, health, rehabilitation of the physically & mentally challenged, vocational training, environmental restoration as well as emergency relief. Param Pujya Bhaishree, Nalinbhai Kothari, is systematically converting Bapuji's vision of a healthy community in Sayla into a reality.

A global network of volunteers contribute their time, energy and skills to support the activities in Sayla which are managed by professional teams that specialise in their fields allowing projects to grow organically to meet the needs of the local population. It is due to this selfless devotion by the volunteers and the sheer professionalism of the project teams that Raj Saubhag can proudly claim the long-term sustainability of the projects in Sayla.



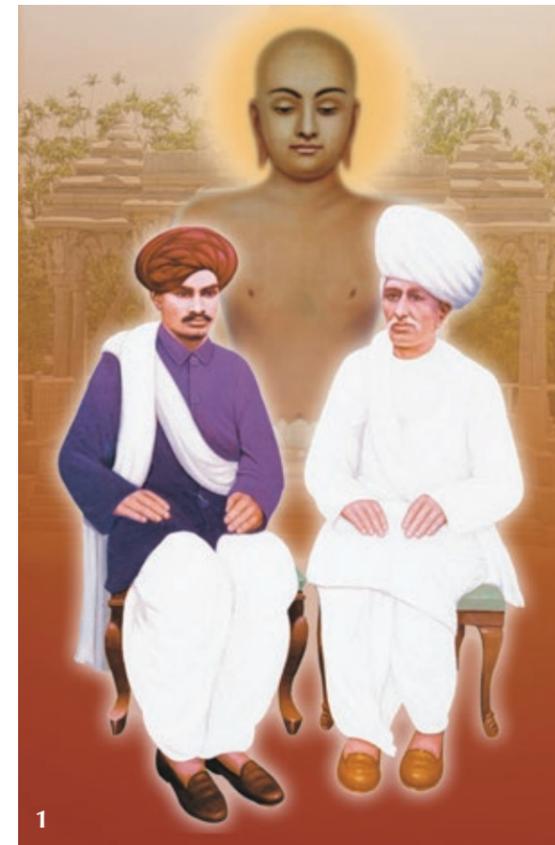
Our Inspiration

Shree Ladakchand Manekchand Vora (1905-1997), affectionately known as Param Pujya Bapuji was the sixth disciple in line from Shree Saubhagbhai. He cast light on Shrimad Rajchandra's spiritual achievements and inspired true love and devotion for him. Bapuji was fully aware of the intimate spiritual relationship between Shrimadji and Saubhagbhai and credited this with many powerful insights which Shrimadji shared in his letters. This provided Bapuji with tremendous insight and impetus on his inner journey.

Bapuji was born in 1905 in Chorvira village. He excelled in his academic studies and won many awards. He joined the local government after completing his matriculation. His skillful management style soon led to his promotion to the post of Judge and then Deputy Collector. He was a role model for his honesty and morality.

While he carried out his duties faithfully and competently, he continued his spiritual journey under the guidance of Gurudev Shree Chhotalal Desai and achieved self-realisation at the age of 33 years. He remained so self-contained that except for his immediate satsang colleagues, nobody realised his spiritual achievements. For forty years he kept his secret. It is a matter of great fortune that Bapuji was eventually discovered by the late great seeker Shantibhai Ambani.

Bapuji established 'Shree Raj Saubhag Ashram' in Sayla in December 1976. He passed on his Guru 'seat' to late Pujya Sadgunaben C U Shah (Gurumaiyaa) and Pujya Nalinbhai Kothari (Bhaishree) who continue his legacy.



In Pictures

Snapshots Past humanitarian work in Sayla

1. Our inspiration: Bhagwan Mahavir, Shrimad Rajchandra & Shree Saubhagbhai
2. Bapuji and Bhaishree observing cataract surgery
3. Bhaishree in eye camp recovery area
4. Bapuji at eye camp registration queue
5. Bapuji & Bhaishree meeting eye patients
6. Bhaishree distributing buttermilk





Photo:
Prem ni Parab Teacher
conducting 'pranayam'
(breathing exercises)
before his workshop

"The highest education is that
which does not merely give us
information but makes our life in
harmony with all existence."

Rabindranath Tagore



Education

Bright Sparks

An introduction to the Ashram's education and vocational training initiatives.

This year over 30,000 bright sparks developed from the Ashram's education initiatives. It was Bapuji's passionate belief that education would benefit both the student as well as the community at large. The education initiatives include LMV Girls High School, LMV College, Prem ni Parab programme, Life Science Centre, the Vocational Training Centre and the Jyot Project raising social awareness.



- Exam results of LMV Girls High School 10th + 12th Standards TOP of Surendranagar League table
- 25,372 students and 860 teachers taking part in Prem ni Parab
- 42 teacher training workshop days with 2166 participants
- Student drop out rate reduced from 29% to 3.89% with Prem ni Parab
- Water and sanitation facilities upgraded in 7 schools
- Top 3 girls of Sayla district were awarded by the Education Minister in 2014, 2 of which were LMV High School girls
- 100% pass rate for LMV College in 2013

Education

LMV Girls High School

The region around Sayla is very conservative in its outlook and parents often do not support their daughters to travel long distances for education, if they support education at all. There was no facility within the local district of 75 villages in which girls could obtain secondary education. Bapuji always had the upliftment of the local community in his heart and particularly empathised with the disadvantaged situation of women.

In 2000 Raj Saubhag Ashram established 'Shree Ladakchand Manekchand Vora (LMV) Girls High School in Sayla town. It started with 40 girls attending 8th standard but over time, classes up to 12th standard were established and now a total of 411 girls attend the high school.

The school has been expanded to a modern 16,000 sq.ft. landmark building in Sayla and is equipped with modern classrooms, laboratories and IT rooms. This has allowed the achievement of some of the highest results in Surendranagar district for several years. Exam results for 10th and 12th Standards are currently at the top of the Surendranagar league tables.

The ethos of the school in this small rural town differs from those in a similar environment. The Principal, Shree Chandrakantbhai Vyas, has created an environment where the girls are given considerable freedom to express their opinions, organise their own activities, take part in the running of the school and made to feel responsible for their own success. They have the opportunity

to participate in many extra-curricular activities to help the girls build more cultured and confident personalities such as classes in classical dance, drama and self-defence. There are many group discussions, debates and elocution lessons in which the girls are encouraged to express and develop their own thoughts and opinions. They also learn about morals, ethics, social work, active citizenship, domestic and public hygiene and environmental conservation.

These activities have not only empowered the girls, educated them and equipped them with broad skills and qualifications, but also has developed them into beacons within their communities. As ambassadors of the school, the girls aid in its reputation of excellence.

LMV College

Previously after completing their 12th standard, many students would either leave education or have to travel long distances to access higher education, which proved particularly difficult for girls. Raj Saubhag Ashram therefore opened the first ever college in Sayla. Working alongside the University of Saurashtra, Shree Ladakchand Manekchand Vora (LMV) College was established in 2007 to offer degrees such as Bachelor of Arts.

Starting with only 11 girls in attendance, today 294 young women attend the college from 25 neighbouring villages. In 2013, the College achieved a 100% pass rate, with 12 girls graduating with Distinction and a further 12 girls passing with 1st class honours.



LMV College:
12 girls graduate with distinction and further 12 with 1st class honours



128 schools given library support and new books in 2014



Vocational Training:
5629 women taught certificate sewing classes for free

Education

Prem ni Parab (Fountain of Love)

Following the earthquake in 2001, 47 new primary schools were built to replace the damaged schools in and around the Sayla district.

Although the newly built schools provided an excellent learning environment, the quality of education being imparted in these and other rural government schools was poor and a major change was essential.

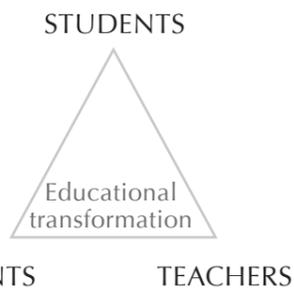
JUST AS A HOUSE WITHOUT LOVE CANNOT BE CALLED A HOME, A WELL-EQUIPPED BUILDING WITHOUT HIGH STANDARDS OF EDUCATION AND RESPECT FOR EACH CHILD CANNOT BE CALLED A SCHOOL.

- Param Pujya Bhaishree

Bhaishree assembled a panel of experienced, dedicated educationalists to draw up an action plan to transform these schools into homes for true education, helping their pupils to create a better future for themselves and their families. The State Government immediately approved the plans presented leading to

the 'Prem ni Parab' ('Fountain of Love') project being launched in January 2004. Initially incorporating 51 schools, its success led to the Gujarat Government requesting the project to extend to include all 128 schools in Sayla District, engaging over 25,000 students and 860 teachers.

The project recognises that teachers, parents and students are the three key constituents of the educational process and the involvement of all three is essential in transforming attitudes towards education.



Students: In an environment of enthusiasm, creativity, healthy competition, mutual respect and trust, each child is invited to unlock his or her vast potential. The Prem ni Parab project provides equipment and support for games, drama, elocution classes, music lessons, arts and crafts and visits to museums and historic places. It also

encourages the teaching of ethics, morals and care for the environment. The aim of these activities is to nurture and expand these young minds.

Teachers: Throughout the year Prem ni Parab organises capacity building workshops for school teachers. Teachers are trained in modern teaching techniques by leading experts and professors and are encouraged to make classes interesting, interactive, practical and thought-provoking. Teachers are taught to develop a bond of mutual love and respect with their pupils, ensuring that the capabilities of each child are valued and developed.

Parents: Historically, many students dropped out of school at an early age. By engaging parents in their child's education drop out rates have reduced from 29% down to below 3.89%, and participation in extra-curricular activities has increased. Parent committees have been formed to forge closer relationships with teachers and schools.

Sayla district was ranked 9th in Surendranagar county in the year 2000 yet today it is ranked 3rd. Sayla has since won a 'Nationwide Best Teacher', a 'State-wide Best Student' and several other national and state awards.

Timeline

Educational initiatives in Sayla

2000	LMV Girls High School opened	2005	Full-time appointment of Chandrakantbhai Vyas as programme director	2009	Jivan Science Centre opened	2014	Prem ni Parab project extended
2001	47 Schools rebuilt following the Gujarat Earthquake	2004	Prem ni Parab project initiated with 51 schools	2007	LMV College opened	2009	Prem ni Parab extended to include 128 schools
2012	Project Jyot launched						



In Pictures
Snapshots Education
1. Science: Students examining slides under microscope
2. Lighting of flame for Prem ni Parab Annual Festival
3. LMV High School girls mark India's Independence Day
4. Teachers workshop
5. Cultivating enthusiasm: students at Science Centre
6. Bhaishree inaugurating a new library at Tidana School



Prem ni Parab celebrates 11 years at the Annual Bal Kilol festival 2015

The annual Bal Kilol Festival is where all 128 schools in Sayla district come together in a celebration of talent and achievement. Bal Kilol in Gujarati means the natural expression of joy by children.

Over 30,000 students took part in a variety of activities from handwriting, essay writing, drawing, painting, rangoli, elocution, drama, traditional and modern dance.

Inter-school group stage competitions took place in the run-up months culminating in the competition finals taking place in the Ashram in January

2015. The ashram came alive with the chatter of excitement.

Awards were given for the Best Teacher (male and female), Best School and Best Student (male and female). A panel of 15 judges, experts of various fields, interview the students and teachers and also visit the various schools shortlisted, to make the final selection.



CASE STUDY: Tidana School

Tidana Primary School was once close to being shut. The school building was run down and nearing collapse. Student attendance was low and exam results poor.

Under Prem ni Parab the school was given a new lease of life. The buildings were renovated with new toilets and classrooms. An invigorating new atmosphere for teaching was created. New teachers were employed and a new teaching ethos implemented. Tidana School went on to win Best School in Sayla in 2009.

The school grounds are adorned with scientific sculptures and inspiring messages. The children gather for a daily morning assembly where students are

assigned roles for leading daily prayers, sharing a thought of the day, current world news, notices and upcoming events. The children have to research their subject individually and then host and deliver the assembly themselves. Once a week each class is taught computer studies in the computer lab which has full internet access. They are also given free time for one afternoon every week to either use the computer learning programs, read in the library or do their art and cultural work.

Modern teaching methods with experiments and learning through play have inspired students with a 100% attendance rate and amazing exam results. There is a buzz of energy and enthusiasm in the school. A joy of learning and a want to progress. Students talk about further education with open eyes looking forward to the future.



On her wedding day

On the 26th April 2012 a historic event occurred in Sayla. A young bride having completed her wedding ceremony, headed straight to her school examination hall to sit her end of year exams while still in her full bridal dress.

Bhanuben Dharmasi Sonagara was in her second year of her BA course at LMV

College of Commerce & Arts. She and her new family decided it was more important for her to complete the exam than to accompany the groom back home for the post-wedding ceremonies.

The villagers of Sayla had never seen such importance being given to a girl's education. She featured in the local newspaper as an inspiration to others for her unprecedented act of courage and determination.



Story writing workshop for women

Raj Saubhag Ashram along with Gujarati Sahitya Parishad hosted a 3 day story writing workshop for female writers at the Ashram in June, 2014.

The mentors included writer and critic Shri Ramesh R. Dave, writer Shri Kirit Dudhar and Professor and Sahitya Academy award winner Dr. Bindu Bhatt. The chief coordinators were Parul Desai and Pragna Patel of 'Annie Saraiya Lekhika Protsahan Nidhi'.

Director of Prem Ni Parab project, Chandrakant Vyas said, "Technology has advanced so much that it is now easy to reach any corner of the globe using an airplane or rocket. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to

reach the hearts of people. It is here that literature comes in. Literature makes it easy to connect with people and influence their minds and hearts. The main aim of literature is to spread peace and ignite fraternal feelings among people."

During the three days, participants were coached on writing styles, encouraged to read more and develop their own distinct style, and follow their passion with confidence and enthusiasm.



"The best thing I liked about this shibir is its time management. The experts were with us throughout the shibir and time was utilised very judiciously. Not a single moment was wasted. The session started early in the morning and extended until late evening (with mini-breaks between). The experts were constantly guiding us, they checked and re-checked our written work and gave us objective feedback."

- Participant feedback



CASE STUDY: Chitralank School

The school is located in the most rural and distant part of Sayla district, a village so cut off and remote that to this day it has not had a bus service to connect it to the wider region. On its stony hill is located a beautiful primary school. The teachers and students have cultivated a garden around the school which houses trees, shrubs and a separate medicinal herb section.

Despite its rural setting, not one of the children in this remote village is illiterate. Not only do all the village children attend school but the school also has a 0% drop out rate. The teachers have developed such a good reputation that when village women marry and move away, they send their children back to this particular school for their education. The school was started in 1984 with just 19 students, and today it is responsible for the education of 182 children.

The school is decorated with the work of the students. On the walls are encouraging and thought provoking

messages. The students manage the gardens and are taught to respect the environment. The teachers have a close and respectful relationship with the students. The Principal, Ghanshyambhai, has devoted the last 24 years to the school along with his wife who also teaches there. His staff travel long distances, choosing this school in particular to teach at due to its warm and loving atmosphere.

The school has become a temple of learning and an outstanding example to others.

Out of the 118 primary schools in Sayla District, 5 outstanding schools are shortlisted every year. They are assessed in all aspects of their delivery, from academia to extra-curricular activities, to the school environment and atmosphere and teacher-student-parent relationships.

In 2013 Chitralank School was deservedly awarded the 'Best School of the year'.

Vocational training: Sewing Classes

Women from Sayla and its neighbouring villages are taught certificate sewing courses free of charge. The educational initiatives of the Ashram also extend to adults. Each course has 30 students and lasts 6 months.

In the past 23 years over 5629 women have been trained. Ashram members have often individually gifted sewing machines to students, empowering the women and providing them with a platform for economic self-sufficiency.



Education

Science in Sayla

Jeevan Vignan Kendra - Life Science Centre

Sayla is proud to be home to one of the very few Science Centres in Gujarat. Established by Raj Saubhag Ashram in 2009, it gives children the opportunity to engage with modern learning facilities and learn about the world of science. With advances in the technological world, understanding scientific principals is becoming increasingly important in education.

The Science Centre houses a seminar room, a laboratory, a library and an interactive science discovery suite in which students can engage with scientific and mathematical models. Students are encouraged to question, experiment and explore.



109
Schools visited the Science Centre last year

3490
student visits yearly

19790
students visited since established in 2009

over **90** interactive models on display in the discovery suite

Summer Science Fest

April 2014

The annual science festival, held in the summer holidays and hosted in the Jeevan Vignan Science Centre in Sayla, aims to inspire student interest in maths and science.

The 5 day festival was facilitated by Professors Manishbhai Meghani, Subhashbhai Dave, Pankajbhai Singhvi

and Director Chandrakant Vyas.

This year's topics included the earth's geography, atmosphere and environment as well as weights, balances and communication models.

Students were taught through presentations, demonstrations, and practical experiments. On the 4th day the 54 students were taken on a trip to Bhavnagar. They visited the prestigious

University of Bhavnagar and the Balwant Parekh Science City where they watched a 40 min 3-D film, and spent 3 hours conducting experiments and building models using different scientific techniques.

On the final day student exhibited all their models, presented their discovered and illustrated their experiments to show all they had learnt and been inspired by.



Education

Jyot

Raising social awareness

The Jyot Project, launched in July 2012, aims to spread the 'flame (jyot) of awareness' of social issues in villages and remote regions through the performance of street plays by the school children of Sayla. If knowledge is power then raising awareness of social and health issues at the village level could lead to a dramatic shift in self empowerment.

Prevention is better than cure

The first Jyot project focused on key issues around the health of pregnant mothers, both before and after giving birth. Understanding of the key issues is lacking, made worse by superstitions and bad practices. As a result the rate of maternal and infant mortality is very high in rural villages.

It was decided that a colourful street play explaining the precautions that need to be taken by mothers would bring the messages to life. A 30 minute play was written and directed by skilled professionals in Mumbai under the guidance and leadership of Brahmnisht Vikrambhai Shah. This was then performed by female students from the LMV High School and College.

Full of humour and simple, practical tips, the play has been an instant hit with an audience of 600 in Vadiya village and 500 in Kerala village. The plan now is to take

it to as many villages as possible across the Sayla district.

The positive impacts of the new awareness can already be seen. In Vadiya the very next day many pregnant women who had previously avoided regular check ups went to the hospital to be checked. Others are now asking authorities to receive benefits from government schemes that they are now aware of, such as free iodized salt during pregnancy.

Their play 'Stri Jivan ni Katokati' was aired on Rajkot Radio 'Akashwani' in February 2013 and heard throughout Gujarat and Mumbai.

'Jeevi Le Jara', Live a little

This second Jyot project focuses on the issues of alcohol addiction: physical, psychological and social.

'Jeevi Le Jara' was first performed by students of Nalanda School, Sayla (Gujarat) along with professional artists

from Ahmedabad in 4 villages and in front of 128 Sayla district school principals. After receiving a great response from villagers, the play was aired on national television by Doordarshan Girnar and telecast across India, U.A.E and Saudi Arabia and continues to be shown in villages and local TV channels.



Though consuming alcohol is banned in Gujarat, it is widely sold on the grey market. The poor quality of illegally sold alcohol is extremely detrimental to mental and physical health of the consumer. Much of the anti-social behaviour and domestic violence is attributed to excessive alcohol consumption.

Jyot project aims to cover many more social issues in the coming years.



Education



Enduring Happiness

Shree Chandrakantbhai Vyas shares his insights as Programme Director for Prem ni Parab and Principal of LMV Girls High School and LMV College.

A meeting with Param Pujya Bhaishree in 2004 became a cornerstone in my life, and the relationship I had formed with Raj Saubhag Ashram from Param Pujya Bapuji's era flourished.

Pujya Bhaishree had an intense desire to bring about a dramatic transformation in the education of our children in Sayla. Under his divine shelter, the 'Prem ni Parab' project was born. At that time, I was the Principal at Vadhaven Gharshala (High School). 'Prem ni Parab' represented the need of the hour -to bring about change in primary education was necessary but would not be easy considering the ingrained mental models existing within those in the education sector. It was difficult to dedicate enough time to the project but Pujya Bhaishree offered me the opportunity to manage the educational activities undertaken by the Ashram and I promptly accepted. Leaving my stable and well paid job, in 2005, I devoted myself fully to the cause.

Nine years have passed by in service and I have now worked with 30,000 students and 850 teachers. I feel completely satisfied with my vocation, as it is only human to like seeing positivity spread.

સંવાદાનુભૂતિનો આનંદ

ચંદ્રકાંત વ્યાસ
(ડાયરેક્ટર-‘પ્રેમની પરબ’, સાયલા)

ઈ.સ. ૨૦૦૪ માં પૂ.ભાઈશ્રીને મળ્યો. વિક્રમભાઈ અને અન્ય સાથે પ્રોજેક્ટ અંગે ચર્ચા કરી ત્યારે આશ્રમ સાથે જે નાતો પહેલેથી જ પૂ.બાપુજી વખતથી હતો તે વધારે દઢ બન્યો. પૂ.ભાઈશ્રીની નિશ્ચિત શિક્ષણ-પરિવર્તનનું કામ કરવાનો ભાવ હતો. ‘પ્રેમની પરબ’ પ્રોજેક્ટ નક્કી થયો. હું વઢવાણ ઘરશાળા (હાઈસ્કૂલ)માં આચાર્ય હતો અને પ્રોજેક્ટનું કાર્ય સંભાળ્યું. પ્રાથમિક શાળાની સ્થિતિ અને માનસ પરિવર્તન કરવાનું કાર્ય વધુ જરૂરી હતું અને અઘરુપણ હતું. હું પૂરો સમય આપી શકતો ન હતો. પૂ.ભાઈશ્રીએ મારી સલામત અને આર્થિક લાભવાળી નોકરી છોડી આશ્રમ દ્વારા ચાલતી શૈક્ષણિક પ્રવૃત્તિ સંભાળવાનું કહ્યું અને મેં સહજ રીતે તે સ્વિકાર્યું અને જૂન-૦૫ થી બધું છોડીને અહીં બેસી ગયો.

આજે ૩૦૦૦૦ બાળકો અને ૮૦૦ શિક્ષકો સાથે કામ કરતા કરતા ૯ વર્ષ પુરા થયા છે. કામનો પૂર્ણ સંતોષ છે. દરેક વ્યક્તિને સારું જ ગમે છે. આપણી ભાવના સારી હોય, આપણા પ્રયત્નો નિષ્ઠા વાળા હોય અને મનથી કોઈ કામને સમર્પિત હોઈએ તો પરિણામ અવશ્ય આવે જ છે. આજે બધા શિક્ષકો - વાલીઓ - વિદ્યાર્થીઓને આશ્રમ સાથે પ્રેમથી બંધાયેલા જોડે છે તો ખૂબ આનંદ થાય છે.

ઘણાં બધા શિક્ષકોમાં ભાવાત્મક પરિવર્તન આવ્યું છે. પૂરા આદર અને હકારાત્મક દ્રષ્ટિ બિંદુથી ‘પ્રેમની પરબ’ ના કાર્યક્રમોનો અમલ કરે છે. કપાંચ વિરોધ નહિ, વિવાદ નહિ, નકારાત્મકતા નહિ, આ બધું કામ કરવાનું, નવા વિચારોનું, નવા પ્રયોગોનું બળ આપે છે.

૧૨૮ પ્રાથમિક શાળાઓના ૩૦૦૦૦ વિદ્યાર્થીઓ અને ૮૦૦ શિક્ષકો આપણને ઓળખતા હોય- સન્માનથી જોતા હોય તે નાનીસૂની વાત નથી.

‘પ્રેમની પરબ’ના દરેક કાર્યક્રમ નાવિન્ય સભર હોય છે, કળદાયી હોય છે, પૂ.ભાઈશ્રી અને વિક્રમભાઈ, મીનાબેન અને અન્યોએ મારામાં મૂકેલ વિશ્વાસ અને કામ કરવા માટે આપેલ સ્વાયતતા મારી જવાબદારી વધારે છે. નિષ્ઠા, કર્મયોગ, નીતિમત્તા, પ્રેમ, આત્મીયતા આ બધા મૂલ્યો જીવનમાં આત્મસાત કરવાનો ખરો આનંદ મળે છે. સારું કામ કર્યાનો સંતોષ થાક લાગવા દેતો નથી.

પૂ.ભાઈશ્રીની વિશાળ દ્રષ્ટિ, દૂરદેશીપણુ અને વ્યક્તિને ઓળખવાની સૂઝ ઉપર હવે ભરોસો બેસી ગયો છે.

જેટલા વર્ષો કામ કરી શકાય એટલા વર્ષો આશ્રમ માટે જ કામ કરવું એવી ભાવના છે. આવું સુંદર - સંતૃપ્ત કરે તેવું કાર્ય મને પ્રાપ્ત થયું. તે મારું સદ્ભાગ્ય સમજું છું અને શિક્ષણમાં હકારાત્મક પરિવર્તન માટે નિમિત્ત બની શકવાનું ગૌરવ અનુભવું છું.

Any activity done with sincere efforts and dedication of the mind is bound to reap rich dividends. Today my heart brims with joy when I see the love that the students, teachers and parents harbour towards the ashram.

Apparent transformation can be observed in many of the teachers associated with this project. They attend workshops conducted by “Prem Ni Parab” with positivity and respect and knowledge and training given through this program has been well implemented by them.

Working in an environment that is devoid of opposition, argument, and negativity only further inspires new thoughts, new initiatives and new programmes. It is a privilege to be friends with 30000 primary school students and 800 teachers from 128 such schools.

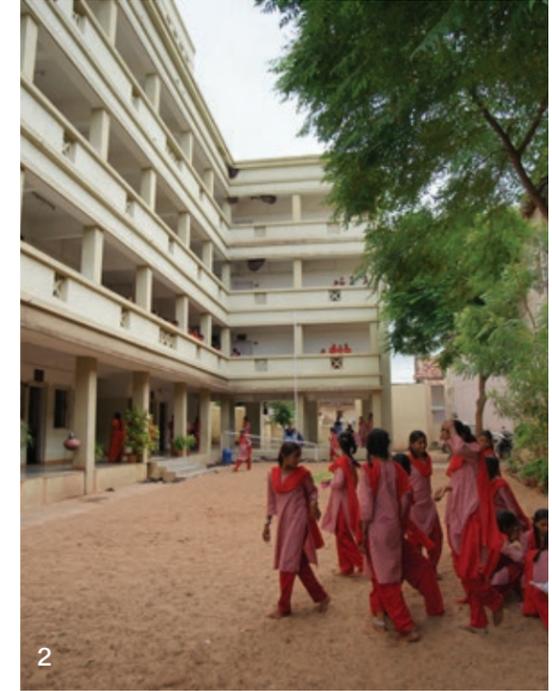
Every programme of ‘Prem ni Parab’

comes packed with something new and innovative and is immensely beneficial. Pujya Bhaishree, Br Vikrambhai and Br Minalben's faith in me increases my responsibility manifold and I truly feel blessed in imbibing values like sincerity, dutifulness, morality, love and oneness in my life. The satisfaction of doing a good job keeps the fatigue at bay.

I have now developed enormous faith in Pujya Bhaishree's magnanimous vision, far-sightedness, and the ability to appraise a person.

I have a desire to work for this Ashram for as long as I can, it is indeed my good fortune to be associated with such a beautiful and fulfilling job. I feel really proud to have been a catalyst in bringing about a positive change in the education sector.

Chandrakant Vyas



In Pictures

Snapshots Education

1. Science: Students examining slides under microscope
2. LMV Girls High School and College
3. LMV High School girls in class
4. Science Centre: workshop on communication models
5. Tidana School students singing prayers at the morning assembly
6. Extra-curricular activities: learning classical dance



Photo: Cataract surgery taking place at the Raj Saubhag KHS Eye Hospital

Health

Seeing is believing

An introduction to KHS Eye Hospital

Since 1987, eye camps were held annually in the Ashram. In 2006 a purpose built Eye Hospital was constructed in Sayla town centre.

The Kashiben Harkisandas Sanghrajka (KHS) Eye Hospital is equipped with the latest PHACO machines and currently conducts approximately 3500 cataract operations every year. This includes surgery for glaucoma, pterygium and corneal relaxing procedures. There are two full-time ophthalmic surgeons Dr Kamalbhai Shah and Dr Vidhyut supported by their team of staff.

Patients are screened in Out-patient Clinics or Eye Camps. All treatment, including surgery, lens implants, medication and

in-patient care with meals, is provided completely free of charge. Patients are welcome to give donations, and many do, even those from poor backgrounds

The hospital's dedication and hardworking ethic was displayed on 27th Aug 2012 when Dr Kamalbhai examined a record 167 new patients and 25 follow-ups in one day along with performing 11 eye operations. Over the past 11 years, 186,300 patients have been seen in the out-patient department and over 29,965 operations have been undertaken.

EYE CAMP



Location: Chuda village, Gujarat, India
Date: October 2013

Raj Saubhag collaborated with sponsors Avo Amari Sathe Satsang Mandal, Sion (Mumbai) in organising a Eye Diagnostic Camp in Chuda village, Gujarat. Dr Kamalbhai's team treated and examined 450 patients. Dr Kulin Kothari, eminent eye surgeon from Mumbai graced the occasion: 'I am very impressed with the magnitude of treatment offered by KHS Eye Hospital under Raj Saubhag Ashram. It is truly remarkable'.



Dr Kamal Shah

Dr Kamal Shah shares his insights about working at the Raj Saubhag Eye Hospital.

I joined this Eye Hospital at its inception. When I first visited Param Pujya Bhaishree and Raj Saubhag Ashram, I was overwhelmed by observing the unique combination of spiritual and social causes. I realised that by working here, I would be able to achieve a spiritual growth in my life through my professional work. No feeling is better than to give vision to the blind and needy people in this rural area.

We started our Eye Hospital as a small unit, but with the blessings of Pujya Bhaishree, we are giving the best of the best eye care to thousands of patients in this rural area, it is on par with any metro-city, and we are still growing. Giving eyesight to the poorest of the poor people is the only passion that drives us to work harder and harder.

Dr Kamal Shah



Numbers:

34,011

eye operations completed to date
341,000 patients assessed

In the past year:

36,688 patients assessed in OPD
4234 cataract operations
27 other eye operations



Photo: Examination of a patient by Dr Sharma at the Raj Saubhag Dental Clinic

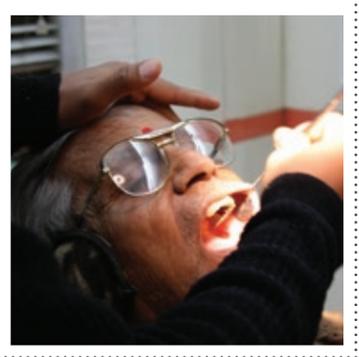
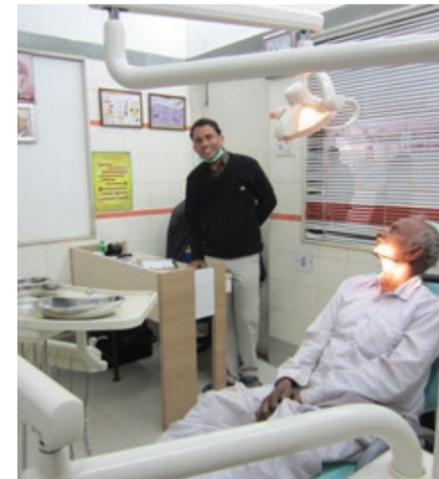
Health

Something to smile about

An introduction to the Dental Surgery

Raj Saubhag Ashram proudly opened a state of the art dental surgery in July 2010. Previously, the nearest dental surgery was in Surendranagar an unaffordable distance for many to travel to.

The modern clinic is equipped to a high standard with a sophisticated dental chair, X-ray unit and autoclave. Dr Sharma is the full-time dental surgeon based here. Camps are being held monthly where patients are seen free of charge. Many of the Ashram's volunteers who are dentists in Mumbai and Ahmedabad such as Dr. Komal Shah and Dr Aarti Shah - support these camps bringing their time and expertise to Sayla at no cost to the ashram. Last year 5456 patients were treated at the surgery.



CASE STUDY: Dental Camp

Location: Sayla, Gujarat
Date: January 2014 India

A 5 day Dental Camp, sponsored by Anilbhai and Alkabehn Doshi of Dubai, was held in January 2014. Patients were offered diagnosis and treatment free of charge.

Many of those attending had very poor dental hygiene requiring tooth extractions, extensive cleaning and counselling on good oral care. Oral submucosal fibrosis is also commonly diagnosed in young males aged 20 - 25. Having a habit of chewing tobacco causes scar tissue and damage to the lining of the mouth, restricting how much the mouth can be opened.

Numbers Sayla Dental Surgery

Opened in 2010

5456 patients treated in the Dental Surgery in the past year

over 85 teeth extracted every month

44 fillings in the past year

107 X-rays taken yearly

541 root canal treatments completed

The only dental surgery in Sayla

Free Dental camps held every month



222 Dentures fitted



Health

Community Health Centre

An introduction to Sayla Community Health Centre (CHC)



In 1998 Raj Saubhag Ashram opened a general medical dispensary to provide medical advice for those who could not afford private services. Demand was high, with 80 patients seen every day.

In 2008 the State Government of Gujarat requested the Ashram to take over the management of the poorly performing Sayla Community Health Centre (CHC). Services at the dispensary were closed and attention was shifted to focus on the Community Health Centre.

Today Sayla CHC provides services for the entire district of 75 villages and a population of over 120,000. The Ashram refurbished the facilities and provided

additional medical services that were not previously available. The Ashram now manages the centre with the government contributing part of the running costs.

The centre provides basic emergency medical services and has expanded to include 4 medical officers, a surgeon, an obstetrician, 7 nursing sisters, 15 paramedical staff, a pharmacist, 2 lab technicians, a radiographer and 4 administrative staff.

Since the change in management, the number of patients seen in outpatients has risen from 150 to 300 per day and new born deliveries have increased from 5 a month to over 80 a month. In the

past year, 75,000 patients were seen as out-patients, 2400 x-rays were taken, 900 babies were delivered and 3950 surgeries were performed.

Charges for registration and treatment are as per government regulations and heavily subsidised.

In the paediatric department Dr Masrani examines approximately 50-60 children daily in the outpatient department. Emergency services are provided around the clock. Sayla CHC has been classified as a 'New Born Stabilisation Centre' and also has a Child Development and Nutrition Centre for malnourished babies.



Numbers Community Health Centre

over **900** babies delivered last year

31693 lab tests undertaken in the past year

75874 patients seen in the Outpatient Dept (OPD) last year

ICT centre for HIV detection, counselling and treatment

3747 minor operations undertaken in the past year

223 major operations undertaken last year

2480 X-rays taken on the new X-ray machine last year

CASE STUDY: Medical Camp

Multi-disciplinary Medical Camp
Location: Sayla CHC Gujarat, India

Healthcare in Sayla is limited and for specialist medical services people have to travel to either Surendranagar or Rajkot at considerable cost that many can not afford.

To alleviate this problem, Raj Saubhag Ashram has started holding medical camps at the Community Health Centre. The first was held in 2010 and since then camps have become a regular event, funded by charitable sponsors. In August 2012 a major camp was held in conjunction with the Rotary Club of Rajkot Midtown who had generously agreed to provide medical specialists free of all costs. Additionally, the Club

members had agreed to fund the cost of all required medical operations subject to Raj Saubhag paying the first Rs. 5,000 of the cost. Raj Saubhag's London members had provided funds for 60 operations. The Sayla Community Health Centre provided free X-ray, lab test

services and required medication.

Three ENT surgeons, three Orthopaedic surgeons, a Plastic surgeon, Dermatologist, three Gynaecologists and a Diabetic Foot Surgeon totalled 14 medical specialists that donated their time and expertise.

Total Patients: 439
Medical specialists: 14



Altogether 439 patients (from Sayla, Muli, Vadhavan & Chuda Districts) were examined and 27 were given dates for operations in Sayla. One lady requiring immediate treatment for uterine cancer was admitted to hospital directly from the camp.

Gujarat State Minister for Environment & Forestry, Shree Kiritsinhji Rana, President of the Rotary Club Shree Ashwinbhai Kamdar and various other State and local dignitaries attended and gave their blessings.



Photo: Ashirvad children playing in the garden

Ashirvad

Ashirvad Trust

Rehabilitation of the differently abled

Ashirvad Trust aims to rehabilitate people with disabilities; to reach and to serve them through love and dedication with the ultimate goal of enabling independence.

Sayla district has long suffered from the lack of support services for thousands of blind and disabled people. In 1996, through the divine inspiration of Param Pujya Bhaishree, a new institute, 'Ashirvad Trust for the Disabled (ATD)', was established. Raj Saubhag Ashram partnered with the Blind People's Association of Ahmedabad who brought their vast experience and technical expertise to the work.

Ashirvad Trust has rehabilitated differently abled children and adults with physical and/or mental challenges living in remote villages across the Sayla district. Starting from a simple converted house in the Ashram, the project grew and a purpose built 20,000 sq. ft modern resource and day centre was built in Sayla. Today, the Ashirvad Trust has three active day centres - Ashirvad Centre (Sayla), Upasana Kendra (Surendranagar) and Kshamata Kendra (Limbdli).

Centre Based Rehabilitation

The three centres provide services for 276 children with various disabilities such as: blindness, deafness, visual, hearing, speech and mental impairment, cerebral palsy and other multi-disabilities. The centre is equipped with modern up-to-date technology including computers, brailers, tactile maps, mobility aids, play materials and specialist dark rooms.

Field workers from Ashirvad Trust travel to villages to identify those with disabilities that have needs unmet. Their aim is to achieve holistic rehabilitation. The field workers provide initial training in the home environment on basic personal hygiene and social skills. In many cases parents have neglected these children due to financial constraints and social stigma.

After foundational training, the children and parents are brought to one of the centres for a medical and developmental assessment. A personal plan is developed for their multi-disciplinary rehabilitation programme. The team consisting of doctors including ENT and orthopaedic specialists, neurologists, psychiatrists along with psychologists, professional teachers and physiotherapists put together a comprehensive and personalised programme for rehabilitation.



AT THE HEART OF ASHIRVAD TRUST LIES A BELIEF IN INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION. PEOPLE OF ALL ABILITIES DESERVE LOVE, DIGNITY AND CHOICES.

Community based Rehabilitation

Many people are unable to travel or attend a day care centre for numerous reasons, such as severe disabilities, living in remote areas, family obligations and severe poverty. Funding from Gujarat Government and Department of Social Justice and Empowerment allows the Ashirvad Trust to provide rehabilitation services for over 2200 disabled people across Surendranagar county at their own doorsteps.



276 children supported in 3 day care centres: Sayla, Limbdi and Surendranagar



226 children integrated into main stream schools



116 people vocationally trained in the past year



17 self help groups with 252 members

Ashirvad

Physiotherapy

The Ashirvad Centre provides a physiotherapy service free of charge to the local community, where the physiotherapists provide assessment, advice and treatment for those with disabilities. Many visitors are impressed and inspired by the fact that the qualified physiotherapist here is blind. In addition, patients are referred from the Community Health Centre for physiotherapy following accidents, injuries or after surgery. Last year, 1118 individuals used this service.



Training Centre for field workers

The Ashirvad Trust is a recognised agency for conducting training for disability field workers and is a human resource training centre. People from Indian disability-related institutions regularly attend training days and field visits held by Ashirvad. Nurses and paramedics in training are sent from colleges in Rajkot and Surendranagar to observe Ashirvad staff and to learn how to communicate with, and manage those, with mental and physical disability.



Social Awareness Programme

To build awareness of disability issues, the Ashirvad Trust conducts workshops and presentations to inform and connect with society. Midwives, panchyat officers (community leaders), police, judges and magistrates are trained to ensure early recognition and fair treatment of those with disabilities.

Mental Illness Project

Until recently, mental illness in the region would mostly go undiagnosed and untreated. In response, a new service has been introduced by the Ashirvad Trust - 'The Mental Illness Project' to help diagnose, treat and raise awareness about mental health. During four recent screening camps, 324 cases were registered. As a result of this project, a psychiatrist now visits Surendranagar and Limbdi Civil Hospitals each month to help diagnose mental illnesses.

Vocational training

Training in crafts and vocations is provided to deaf, blind or otherwise disabled adults to empower them and aid economic self-sufficiency. They are given workshops in trades such as tailoring, bead work, beauty care, henna art (mehndi), cooking, knitting, jute work, mobile phone repairing, repair of diesel engines and scooters. Traders are often donated market carts and crafts men and women their sewing machines to help them get started in business.

At a glance:

Number of people given vocational training in the past year:

- Paper bowl making 25
- Tailoring 15
- Mobile repairing 25
- Handicraft 26
- Jewellery making 25

Vocational kits donated last year:

- Sewing Machine 15
- Beauty Parlour kit 3
- Traders hand cart 5
- Mobile repair kit 10
- Plumber kit 1
- Carpentry kit 2
- Shop 14
- Cycle repair kit 2



In Pictures

Snapshots

Ashirvad

1. Bhaishree & Dr Saroj Sanghavi of Lions Club Tardev Mumbai at the Ashirvad Sensory park
2. Gopi having treatment by blind physiotherapist Surendrabhai
3. Upasana centre student dancing at the opening ceremony
4. Bhaishree shaking hands with a recipient of an artificial arm
5. Children learning about health in the Ashirvad Centre
6. Children playing in the Ashirvad multt-sensory park



Ashirvad training centre opened

The Ashirvad Centre has been training teachers and health workers for many years. In December 2013 a purpose built 10,000 training centre was opened at the Ashirvad Centre in Sayla.

In partnership with The Blind People's Association and with the generous sponsorship of Ranjanben and her son Deepakbhai Kamdar this iconic centre was inaugurated with the blessings of Param Pujya Bhaishree.

To mark the inauguration the National Institute of Empowerment sponsored

the distribution of 118 education kits designed for those with visual impairment.

'I have visited many institutions catering to people with special needs, and when I compare them with Ashirvad Centre, I say with extreme satisfaction, that you have created an institution with a heart. Not only is the building and infrastructure par excellence, the spirit of teachers and caregivers is heart-warming.'

- MLA Varshaben Doshi,



Mobility camp held in Nairobi, Kenya

In May 2013 Raj Saubhag Ashram's Ashirvad Trust held its first international mobility camp in Nairobi, Kenya, gifting mobility and hearing aids to 407 beneficiaries.

Ashirvad Trust worked in collaboration with Jaipur Foot, Association for the Physically Disabled of Kenya, Lions First Sight Hospital and the National Fund for the Blind.

The camp was sponsored by the Patel, Sanghrajka and Doshi families with their associated trusts of Manav Foundation and BK Sanghrajka Foundation and were represented by Arunbhai Doshi, Ramnikbhai Patel and Jaysukhbhai Sanghrajka.



'I am so impressed with your wonderful centre, so young but so professional! Its great to see what improvements to the quality of life of disabled people you are able to support. A very committed team and excellent fundraising.'

- Sally Monkmon, Consultant, UK

Self help groups

Seventeen Self Help groups have been set up with a total of 252 members. The groups encourage self-sufficiency and women empowerment. The groups gather regularly and participate in collective saving schemes, provide financial support to one another, spread awareness of disability, help integrate disabled women into the community and take part in crafts and small entrepreneurial pursuits to strengthen their family livelihoods.



Anjanaben Acharya awarded Best Teacher for the Disabled

Anjanaben, a teacher at the Ashirvad Centre in Sayla was presented with the District's Best Teacher for the Disabled Award by the Education Minister of Gujarat Shri Ramanlal Vohra in 2008.



'Remarkable work! A very holistic approach and a very dedicated and committed team.'

- Rekha Menon, Sightsavers International

Ashirvad awarded Rehabilitation Institution Award

The Ashirvad Trust was awarded the Smt. Nandini P Divatia Rural Rehabilitation Institution Award from the Rural Development and Management Institute (RUDMI), Ahmedabad in 2012.

World class sensory park in Sayla

In December 2011, a Children's Sensory, Mobility and Amusement park was opened at the Ashirvad Centre, Sayla. The park was created with equipment, colours, materials and textures specifically designed for fun, safety, education and development -an experience to stimulate children's minds and senses to enhance the functionality of their limbs.

It was thanks to the support and specialist input of members of the Lions Club of Tardev Mumbai that such a contemporary rehabilitation centre was conceived. Their active alliance was instrumental and their continuing commitment has facilitated four medical and physiotherapy

'I have never heard of a Sensory Park in a village! In all of India, Sayla is the only village with a Sensory Park. The Ashirvad Trust, managed by Raj Saubhag Ashram, has truly set an example for all organisations in India. No one could ever imagine that a place as small as Sayla is home to such a well-designed, well-maintained and well-managed organisation. It's a wonder! Full credit for this achievement goes to Param Pujya Bhaishree and his entire team. The organisation has made an inspiring mark on the world map.'

Mr Bhushan Punani,
Exec Director
Blind People's Association of India



CASE STUDY: Mahesh

Zest for Life

Mahesh brims with enthusiasm and is full of zeal to live his life to the fullest. This is his story.

Mahesh was born to a poor family 12 years ago in Vadia Village of Sayla District. Just three months after his birth, he suffered from prolonged seizures, resulting in damaged brain function and intellectual impairment.

When project staff first identified him, he was still suffering from severe, regular epileptic seizures. Due to his brain impairment, he could not speak properly, he had difficulty with his vision, he was unable to walk confidently and was dependant on others for personal care. At home, his parents were unaware of state entitlements for his condition, and struggled to provide for him. He was socially undermined as his surrounding community did not understand his impairment and excluded him. He lost his confidence and did not attend school.

He was selected for the Ashirvad rehabilitation program following a comprehensive assessment of his medical, social, and educational requirements. He was medically reviewed and his seizures were brought under control through medication. A multi-disciplinary team, consisting of special educators, a physiotherapist, an ophthalmologist and a psychologist, developed a comprehensive program for him. His parents were counselled and trained in Sayla.



Mahesh was admitted to the local village school as Ashirvad believes in promoting social inclusion. He was the first child with a disability to be admitted in the school and both his teacher and

Principal were called to Sayla for a 2-day training program on inclusive practices. Both Mahesh and his school continue to be supported by the Ashirvad Trust.

Mahesh attends the Ashirvad Centre in Sayla regularly. Thanks to the hard work of his team, his teachers and his parents, Mahesh can now talk and participates well in class. He understands basic commands and also utilises his vision meaningfully. He goes to school every day. He has also been helped to get various entitlements from the State including a disability certificate, an identity card, a scholarship from the government, an educational kit from Sarva Shiksha Abhivan and enrolment under the Niramaya scheme.

When he was first identified, his father used to carry him as he was not confident to walk independently. Now Mahesh goes to school on his own, walks independently, sits with his 50 classmates in total inclusion and is valued by his family and by society. He has been shown love and respect and he smiles, laughs and interacts with confidence. He inspires us with his energy and zest for life.



Photo: Bhaishree thanking Ashirvad Student for his welcome

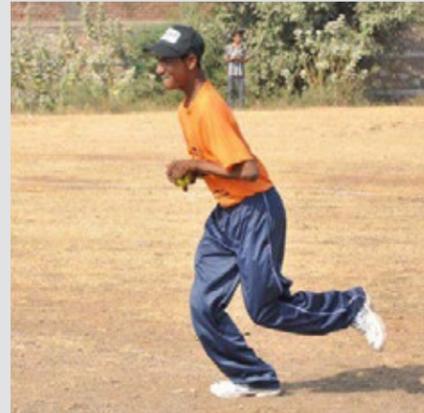
“All love is expansion, all selfishness is contraction. Love is therefore the only law of life. He who loves lives, he who is selfish is dying. Therefore love for love's sake, because it is the only law of life, just as you breathe to live.”

Swami Vivekananda

Social integration through sports

At the Ashirvad Centre children are taught that they each have individual talents with which they can shine. Gaining self-confidence from their teachers' enthusiasm and training, many children with various physical and mental disabilities have become active in competitive sports.

In December 2011, 26 children from the Ashirvad Centre were selected to compete in the Gujarat State Sports Festival. From these, 16 children competed at the State Level and 4 came home with medals in Running,



Fast Walking and Ball Throwing.

In January 2013, Ashirvad Centre hosted its second cricket league match between the Surendranagar Sherdills and the Ahmedabad Aggressors. Vipul, a student of the Ashirvad Centre, was one of the players. Each cricket team included a mix of abled and disabled students.

These cricket matches are part of a new kind of IPL - "Inclusive Premier League" - which is an awareness-raising campaign being led by the National Trust. It aims to support the cultural and social integration of people with disabilities.



CASE STUDY: Dharmesh

The Community Leader

Twenty seven year old Dharmesh Ravjibhai has impaired mobility from contracting polio at a young age. Dharmesh lives in Barejadi Village and used to walk with the aid of a rough stick. Though he was very intelligent, he did not know how to use his skills, so he used to hang about idle at pan shops for most of the day and was criticised by his family for not earning money.

When a field worker identified him, Dharmesh felt he did not need any help. He was urged by the field worker to change his walking stick to prevent spinal deformity in the future. Dharmesh

agreed to this and was also helped to get a Disability Certificate. After being given a pair of crutches, he was suddenly able to stand tall. He now wanted to earn a living. He completed a mobile phone repairing class and was given a mobile phone repairing kit. He was helped into employment under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA).

Dharmesh felt so empowered by the process and the NREGA scheme that he became an advocate and helped many others to benefit from employment. He also helped many people to get housing under Indira Awas Yojana. His respect in society rose and he was recently elected to represent his village as a panchayat member. He is now the 'Person with Disability' (PWD) leader of his village

Special Olympics: Ready, Set GO!

The Ashirvad Centre along with The Society for Physically Handicapped (Ahmedabad) and the Sports Authority of Gujarat hosted a two day Special Olympics for 600 children with orthopaedic disabilities.

'We are only here for one reason and that is to support you. If our child or a friend takes part in a match, we go along to support and encourage them, 'You will come first'. Just from the single quality of **self belief**, you will open up a treasure chest of innumerable qualities within you that will make your life easier, joyful and peaceful'

- Param Pujya Bhaishree



Ashirvad

Shree Rambhai Jadav

Shree Rambhai Jadav shares his insights and inspiration as programme director for the Ashirvad Trust.



Whilst working with the Blind People's Association of Ahmedabad, I was blessed to have met Param Pujya Bapuji in 1996. It gave me such pleasure to host a disability camp where he donated tricycles to those with disability with his own hands.

After 2 years, I met Param Pujya Bhaishree when we hosted a mobility camp in the Ashram grounds. From this point I realised that with Pujya Bhaishree's blessings we would be able to give those with disabilities the respected place in society that they deserved. We started a small day care centre within the Ashram through the generous donations of Arunbhai Doshi. Pujya Bhaishree and Pujya Gurumaiyaa would be present for every celebration and event, and with their energy and blessings the centre grew.

શ્રી રાજસૌભાગ સત્સંગ મંડળ સાયલા

સંચાલિત

આશીર્વાદ વિકલાંગ કેન્દ્ર સાયલા

અમદાવાદ અંધજન મંડળ દ્વારા સાયલા તાલુકામાં પુનઃવર્સન કાર્યક્રમ ચાલતો હતો તે દરમિયાન ઈ.સ. ૧૯૯૬ માં પરમ કૃપાળુ પુજ્ય બાપુજી ના દર્શન કરવાનો લ્હાવો મળ્યો. અને તેમના હસ્તે વિકલાંગો ને ટ્રાયસિકલ વિતરણ કરવાનો અનેરો આનંદ મળ્યો.

ત્યાર બાદ લગભગ બે વર્ષ પછી પરમ પુજ્ય ભાઈશ્રી ના દર્શન કરવા હું આશ્રમમાં આવ્યો અને પરમ પુજ્ય ભાઈશ્રી ના હસ્તે વિકલાંગોને સાધન વિતરણ કરવાનો મને મોકો મળ્યો. અને ત્યારથીજ મનમાં એવી ભાવના હતી કે પરમ પુજ્ય ભાઈશ્રી ના આશીર્વાદ થી વિકલાંગોને સમાજમાં માનભરે સ્થાન મળે અને એ અવસર મને મળ્યો. અને આશ્રમના પ્રાંગણમાંજ નાનું એવું સેન્ટર અરણભાઈ દોશીના ઘરમાં આશીર્વાદ કે કેર સેન્ટર બે બાળકોથી શરૂ કર્યું. અને વિકલાંગ બાળકોના દરેક ઉત્સવમાં પરમ પુજ્ય ભાઈશ્રી અને ગુરુમૈયા પધારતા અને અમને હુંફ અને આશીર્વાદ મળતા રહ્યા. અને પરમ પુજ્ય ભાઈશ્રી દરેક વખતે કહેતા કે આ સેન્ટર ખુબ જ મોટું થશે અને વિકલાંગ બાળકો હસતા, રમતા અને કુદતા થશે અને એવું જ બન્યું. આશીર્વાદ સેન્ટરની સાથે સાથે બીજા બે કેન્દ્રો ક્ષમતા અને ઉપાસના કેન્દ્રો બન્યા. અને આમ આશીર્વાદ નું વટવુક્ષ મોટું થતું ગયું. અને શ્રી વિક્રમભાઈ, શ્રી મિનળબેન, શ્રી અરણભાઈ, શ્રી જયસુખભાઈ અને મુમુક્ષો ના આશીર્વાદ મળતા રહ્યા. અને પરમ પુજ્યભાઈશ્રી ની નિશ્રામાં ચાલતા આધ્યાત્મિક કાર્યક્રમોનું આ એક કાર્ય બની રહ્યું. અને આજે ભારત નહીં વિદેશ સુધી પણ આ સેવા કાર્યની સુવાસ ફેલાવા લાગી છે.

મને પરમ પુજ્ય ભાઈશ્રી દ્વારા એવું આત્મબળ મળ્યું છે કે હું છેવાડાના માનવી (વિકલાંગો) સુધી પહોંચીને અંદાજે ૫૦,૦૦૦ ઉપરના વિકલાંગોને વૈદકીય, શૈક્ષણિક, સામાજિક અને આર્થિક પુનઃવર્સન સાધનો કે તાલીમ આપી ને સમાજ માં માનભરે જીવવાની કેડી કંડારી છે. સાથે સાથે જ ગુજરાત અને ગુજરાત બહારના લગભગ ૫,૦૦૦ કાર્યકરો આશીર્વાદ વિકલાંગ કેન્દ્ર દ્વારા તૈયાર કર્યા છે. અને આજે તે ભારતભરમાં કામ કરી રહ્યા છે.

Pujya Bhaishree envisioned that the centre would one day become a large beacon organisation where children with disabilities would laugh, play and jump for joy, and this is exactly what has happened. Not only have we developed a large day centre in Sayla town, but 2 further centres have been developed in Surendranagar and Limbdi. With the support of the Brahmnishts and Ashram Mumukshus, the work carried out by Ashirvad Trust has been recognised throughout India and beyond.

Pujya Bhaishree has inspired such inner strength in me that through our work, we have been able to reach over 50,000 disabled children and adults. We have been able to provide them with medical, educational, social and financial support to help them become self-sufficient and give them a respected standing in society. Alongside this, we have trained over 5000 workers from Gujarat and beyond who now work throughout India to help meet the needs of those that live with disabilities and empower them to utilise their unique abilities.

Rambhai Jadav



Ashirvad

Mobility camps

Empowering independence and self-sufficiency

Mobility camps have been conducted throughout Gujarat and as far afield as Kenya in Africa, by the Ashirvad Trust. Where a need is identified, the population in the local vicinity to the camp are screened and a functional assessment is made in the home environment of individuals requiring mobility assistance. Equipment such as wheelchairs, tricycles, callipers, artificial limbs, CT chairs, crutches, hearing aids and educational kits are subsequently distributed.



Over **18,950** mobility aids distributed by the Ashirvad Trust

380 artificial limbs fitted

2949 hearing aids fitted

4112 Wheelchairs and tricycles distributed

CASE STUDY: WAAV CAMP

Ashirvad Mobility Camp
Location: Waav, Gujarat, India
Date 23rd Dec 2014

Waav, a small town on the border between Gujarat and Rajasthan was identified as community members requiring mobility assistance aids.

Health workers visited 105 villages surrounding Waav to inform the community of the event. Prior to the camp a team of doctors screened patients to ascertain their needs and a total of 425 recipients were identified. The mobility equipment was distributed on the day of the camp organised in the grounds of Vinay Mandir School in Waav and sponsored by Birenbhai and Shilpaben Jasani in celebration of their 25th Wedding anniversary.

A camp blessing ceremony was conducted to welcome all recipients, to thank all donors and staff, to remember the values of charity and to give blessings for the occasion.

Recipients were welcomed and along with their mobility aid they were also given training on how to use it. Those requiring arm or leg prosthetic limbs had measurements and impressions taken during the initial screening so that a custom made cast could be prepared in advance. This was then fitted and adjusted on the day.

All recipients were provided lunch. If they had travelled long distances, transport was provided to help them get their tricycle or wheelchair back home.

"I am almost 70 years old, and as can be expected my experiences with human beings around me have made me cynical and pessimistic. However, when 3 months ago, I witnessed the selflessness of these health workers from Raj Saubhag Ashram's ATD centre, my faith in humanity was restored. I urge all of you, beneficiaries to repay the generosity of your benefactors through good acts. Take a vow right now."

- Principal, Vinay Mandir School

At a glance:

Total Recipients: 425

Items donated: Tricycles (150), wheelchairs (150), cerebral palsy chairs, artificial limbs (arms and legs), education kits for special needs children

Tricycles are assembled at the Blind People's Association in Bhuj, India.

Prosthetic limbs are German made with a steel and plastic body.



Param Pujya Bhaishree's empowering message:

'We are all differently abled. We see the physical constraints in the people around us, but are blind to our own mental disabilities, our lack of open mindedness, will power and strength of conviction. We often fail to endure such small obstacles in life where those with physical disabilities suffer and yet have the ability to smile and show love.

By giving these friends help to manage their physical constraints, we allow them to discover their vast potential,

to explore their abilities and become self-sufficient in life. They gain the chance to get up and run. We too should be inspired to free ourselves from our bindings, discover our inner strengths and abilities and move forward towards our goals in life.'

He spoke directly to the beneficiaries: 'there was nothing they couldn't achieve if they put their mind to it. The biggest obstacle holding us back is ourselves.'



Alleviating hardship

Alleviating hardship

Food Grain and Clothes Distribution

For over 20 years, Raj Saubhag Ashram members have been distributing grains and clothes to individuals and families that are struggling to make ends meet and live far below the poverty line. Currently every month, 3.5 tonnes of grain are distributed to 268 families spread over 38 villages in Sayla district to enable them food security.

Assessments of need are an ongoing and in-depth process that involve the input of the recipients, their community, a third party verifier and the project managers. Families are often identified due to physical or mental incapacity, widows with dependants or other extenuating circumstances. The level of support is regularly updated to reflect changing circumstances.

Ashram members deliver the grains and clothes themselves to keep costs low. Fruit, biscuits and clothes are also distributed according to the season.



3.5 tonnes of grain distributed every month

6050 items of clothing distributed last year



Buttermilk Centres

Every summer, Raj Saubhag Ashram distributes buttermilk to provide relief to villagers in the scorching heat. 15 free Buttermilk Distribution Centres are set up in 12 villages of Sayla district. Last summer, villages in the district were only getting drinking water delivery every 5 - 10 days. Buttermilk, made from 2 tonnes of milk powder, was distributed providing a cooling and nutritional refreshment at this time.

Alleviating hardships

Alleviating hardship

Food grain and clothes distribution, buttermilk centres and emergency humanitarian relief

Case Study: Laghuben Rasinbhai Kangiya

Sixty-year old handicapped widow Laghuben Rasinbhai Kangiya of Sudamada village supports her 80-year old mother and 55-year old sister. Her sister, who has been abandoned by her husband, has a 10-year old daughter. Laghuben works as a daily wage labourer in the fields and struggles to make two ends meet.

"No one wants to recruit a labourer aged over 50 years. Besides fieldwork is erratic and our meagre income irregular. We are thankful to receive foodgrains from Raj Saubhag Ashram. At least our food is taken care of and we will live to see another day." - Laghuben Kangiya



Case Study: Shardaben Laljibhai Mochi

Shardaben Laljibhai Mochi, an eighty-year old widow living in Jasapur village suffers from osteoporosis. Her son Dinesh, 55 years old, is blind since birth. Both mother and son struggle to make a daily living.

"The ashram has been our unfaltering steadfast friend for years. We thank God that, at least, we will not die of starvation." - Shardaben Mochi



Join hands with us: see pg 40

Animal Welfare

Animal Welfare

Raj Saubhag Ashram has its own Cow Shelter and also works alongside Panjrapoles (Animal Welfare Shelters) in Gujarat to help in sustainable and ethical animal welfare.

The heat wave and drought in summer 2013 affected Gujarat and Saurashtra badly. Water and cattle fodder was scarce and panjrapoles faced acute shortages. Cattle were given just enough feed to keep them alive, and yet many were dying daily. Raj Saubhag Ashram launched a major drive to supply hay and water to local panjrapoles. Daily truck loads of hay were sponsored until the monsoon rains came and the new grass started growing.



CASE STUDY: Veterinary camp

Location: Sayla Mahajan Panjrapole
Date: Jan 2014

A free veterinary treatment camp was held in Sayla by Raj Saubhag Ashram in partnership with Surendranagar Zilla Panchayat (Animal Care branch) and Sayla Mahajan Panjrapole. Farmers and villagers brought many thousands of their animals to seek the expertise of the 9 veterinary physicians and 12 animal welfare professionals. Cows, calves, buffaloes, sheep, goats and dogs were all treated free of charge.

A total of 2120 sheep and goats along with 310 cows and buffaloes were vaccinated against worms and parasites. Vaccinations are expensive and most farmers struggle to manage this.

Foot-and-mouth disease is an infectious and fatal viral disease affecting cloven-hoofed animals. A total of 2432 cows and buffaloes were vaccinated to safeguard them against this disease.

Skilled veterinary surgeons performed 12 major and minor surgical operations at the camp. One cow underwent a surgical resection of a cancerous horn and made a remarkable recovery.

The physicians treated many general and gynaecological ailments including joint arthritis, fevers and mastitis (udder infection in cows).

Farmers were also given educational workshops on the importance and benefits of vaccinations, the latest medical treatments available and how to look after their animals optimally.



2120
Sheep and goats vaccinated against worms and parasites

2432
Cows and buffaloes vaccinated against Foot-and-Mouth Disease

12 operations performed

Emergency Relief

Emergency relief

Following the 2001 earthquake in Gujarat, the Ashram raised over Rs. 4 million from its members and provided 35 tonnes of food, medicines and over 600 tonnes of cement for reconstruction of over 1,300 homes to

the victims in and around Sayla. The Ashram adopted 1500 individuals of a remote village called Ninama which was completely destroyed. The village, renamed Ladakhpur was rebuilt nearby with 335 new homes, a school and a temple. 50% of funding came from the UK Gujarat Earthquake Relief Fund and the Times of India Foundation, the rest from the Gujarat Government.



Environmental Conservation

Water Harvesting

Raj Saubhag has long used rain water harvesting technology in its Ashram for drinking water. Seeing the plight of villagers where water is scarce, the ashram has now partnered with Samerth Trust to work on water harvesting projects in marginalised areas of Gujarat.

Monsoons in India usually last 3-4 months in a year. A normal monsoon would generally provide enough water for humans and animals to survive throughout the year. However there are many rain-deficient regions in the country. Many villages in Gujarat have received only 70% of their share of rainfall this year, while some regions have not even received enough rainwater to last them 6 months.

Kutch: Rapar districts has received only 375 mm of rainfall this year. Areas of Balasar and Gagodar districts received

such scanty rainfall that it will last them a bare 3-4 months. The sporadic rainfall patterns are a cause of grave concern in a rain-dependent nation like India. In the rare incident when it rains heavily for a few days, the poor villagers have no means to accumulate and store this water for future use.

Comprehending the gravity of the situation, Raj Saubhag Ashram partnered with Samerth Trust based in Ahmedabad to initiate projects to ease the challenges of the poor and marginalized sections of society.

Raising Awareness

WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) awareness programmes were launched in 2013 to help curtail water borne diseases.

Adolescent girls in Jatawada and Gagodar Schools took part in Female Hygiene Management workshops conducted by Kanchanben Parmar, a nurse in Gagodar Public Health Centre (PHC).



Fifty volunteers were trained at the Samerth Campus in digging wells

and building check dams. The training was held by Jayrambhai Rajgor, a veteran in the field with a wide range of experience in the arid regions of Kutch. He also held workshops for 104 village volunteers on the responsibilities of the local government, the responsibilities of the village members and committees, water security and planning, managing resources well within the village and sanitation and waste management in the village.



Developing Community Based Water Assets: Check Dams, Reservoirs and wells

Five earthen check dams in Kutch District: Amrapar, Mangadh, Manunam Vandh, Mevasa and Kanmer along with 31 dug wells were completed in 2013. The Amrapar talav (reservoir) with a dug well inside the reservoir collects rainwater that serves the drinking water and domestic needs of 300 families and 1000 cattle for the entire year. The earthen check dam in Kanmer supports over 800 families.



Water Testing

Water samples from 52 intervention areas were tested. 18 samples were found to have a high level of free residual and 36 samples had a high level of hardness amongst other biochemical findings.

The results were discussed with the village communities and in particular with the village health and sanitation committees to help take corrective measures to treat and improve the quality of drinking water.

Our Values

Collaboration

We never assume that we have the best people for the job in-house already. Every project is a close collaboration with other leading organisations, specialists and advisors, bringing in diverse strengths to create the best team possible.

Service

We offer support, not out of superiority, but out of humility. The act of giving help is taking the opportunity to think beyond our own needs, and to expand our sense of self. We are ever grateful to be in service and nurture our inner compassion.

Holistic approach

We design our projects from the perspective of the community, for whom health, education and environment are all connected. By helping them with different facets of their life we are able to tackle challenges in a more effective and long-lasting way.

Professional

Our projects and programmes are recognised on a regional and national level, as some of the best-in-class models. We pride ourselves on delivering a high quality infrastructure and service, even in the most rural and poor areas of the world.

Volunteer-led

The ashram is home to spiritual seekers from around the world. Between us we have many talents, resources, and ideas. These humanitarian projects give us a chance to volunteer ourselves for a greater good, and it helps to keep costs down.

Sustainable

We aim to solve the root of the problem, not just purely the symptoms. This requires creativity and close engagement with the community. Wherever possible, we focus on prevention over cure. We also work closely on women's education and income generation to support their families.

Transparency

Everything we do is completely open and transparent. This allows donors, as well as partners, to understand our project delivery model, as well as offer us constructive feedback for improvement. We invite you to come visit us and see our work for yourself.

Celebrating Volunteers

Our volunteers and donors are our unspoken heroes that facilitate this compassionate work. We thank them all. Here are a few examples of our volunteers and their stories.

Mahendrabhai Mehta

Mahendrabhai, fondly known as Bhanabhai, has dedicated his life to Bapuji and Bhaishree's service. Living in the Ashram, he gives himself totally and voluntarily to the Ashram and its charitable activities. He goes himself every month to deliver the grain, to run buttermilk centres and to manage patients at the various health clinics. He always has time, energy and love for those in need.

"Raj Saubhag volunteer, Mahendrabhai, is indeed an old man with a young heart. When I saw him running from the Ashram to the hospital and other such philanthropic activities, I realised that by dedicating oneself selflessly to humanitarian tasks, an ordinary human being can become an extraordinary great person and eventually attain liberation. I have no doubt about this. I could see the flame of true generosity in Mahendrabhai. Being a patient of cataract at your organisation, I am stating the reality as I have witnessed it. I bow down to your respectable organisation and the donors and social workers associated with it."
~ Hasmukh Dave of Chuda village

Anilbhai and Alkaben Doshi

Dubai based Anilbhai and Alkaben Doshi undertook a pilgrimage of compassion in January 2014. They sponsored an Ashirvad Mobility camp at the Upasana Centre in Surendranagar, distributing aids to 61 beneficiaries. They sponsored an Eye camp of 125 cataract operations and a 5 day Dental Camp for free diagnosis and treatment. They distributed over 4 tonnes of grain to the poor and needy and they sponsored the high school and college fees for 10 girls to be educated in Sayla village.



Arunbhai and Punitben Doshi

Arunbhai and Punitben have dedicated their lives to service. They give themselves selflessly to the Ashram's humanitarian projects and have been

instrumental in the development of the Ashirvad Trust. Their humility and devotion is breathtaking. Forever young, energetic and smiling their arms are always open for a hug and their hearts always singing with smiles.



Shishikunj UK facilitates the transfer of wheelchairs to Sayla for Ashirvad Trust

Shishikunj partnered with Raj Saubhag UK to send refurbished wheelchairs from the UK to India. Volunteers worked hard to load over 244 wheelchairs for adults and children onto a container for shipping.



Join hands with us

Join hands with us

Be an agent for transformation

In our routine and comfortable daily lives it can be easy to forget the plight and misery of others. When we empathise with those less fortunate we can regain some perspective. In our service to others, we not only facilitate transformation of their lives, we also transform ourselves. Compassion for the self and others, combined with detachment, will enable us to live in this world in a way that creates inner peace and harmony with those around us.



LMV Girls High School LMV College

Sponsor a girl's education for 1 year:
High school: Rs. 4000 / £45 / \$80
College: Rs. 6000 / £65 / \$95
General donation. For large donations over Rs. 35,000 / £370 / \$565 we would like to honour your generosity with a permanent inscription at the school donor panel.

Prem ni Parab

A Donation of Rs. 1,800 / £20 / \$30 will support the cost of one pupil in the project for 1 year.

Sewing Training Centre

Sponsor a new sewing machine for Rs. 7,000 / £75 / \$115

Water harvesting

Sponsor a well and give the gift of cleaner water.
Costs from Rs. 20,000 / £220 / \$320.

Ashirvad Trust

Make a donation towards running costs. For large donations over Rs. 21,000 / £230 / \$335 we would like to honour your generosity with a permanent inscription at the school.

Mobility camp

Sponsoring a Mobility camp can enhance the quality of lives of so many. Costs vary depending on size and location of camp - please enquire for further information.

Food grain distribution

Sponsor or contribute towards one month's food grain distribution to the needy: Rs. 80,000 / £870 / \$1280.

Donate second hand clothes for distribution.

Buttermilk distribution

Contribute towards the cost of distributing buttermilk during the hot summer months.

Sight restoration

Sponsor cataract operations costing Rs.1,500 / £16 / \$35 each, including the implantation of a high quality lens. Sponsorship of a Eye camp vary.

Dental Surgery

Contribute to the daily running costs of the Dental surgery by making a donation.
Sponsor a one day Dental camp for Rs. 15,000 / £160 / \$245, giving free assessments and interventions to all recipients.

Community Health Centre

Contribute to the daily running costs of the centre by making a donation.

Sponsor a multi-disciplinary Medical camp involving screening and diagnosing various illnesses. Where possible surgery is completed at the Health Centre, others are referred to tertiary centres in Surendranagar & Rajkot. Arrangements costs vary.

Donate now



Donate in the UK:
UK Registered charity No: 1112669
<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/giving/>
search for 'Raj Saubhag Satsang Mandal'
Or Text (sms) 'RAJS01 £10' to 70070 to make an instant £10 donation



Donate in USA via Google wallet.
All donations are tax deductible (See website).
USA Registered Charity
Tax ID No 20279977

Join hands with us



Thank you

All donations received go in full, directly towards the projects. The entire process is carefully managed, at no cost, by dedicated volunteers from the Ashram.

Each project is managed by qualified and experienced professionals, and supported by partner organisations that specialise in their field. **Our aim is to maximise the impact and long-term sustainability of the work done.**

'Service to Humanity
is Service to God'

- Param Pujya Bapuji



SHREE RAJ SAUBHAG
Prem Ni Parab
Inspiring, uplifting
& energising education



SHREE RAJ SAUBHAG
LMV College



SHREE RAJ SAUBHAG
Eye Hospital



SHREE RAJ SAUBHAG
**Ashirvad Trust
For The Disabled**



SHREE RAJ SAUBHAG
Alleviating Hardship
Grain, clothes & buttermilk
distribution, emergency relief



SHREE RAJ SAUBHAG
LMV Girls High School



SHREE RAJ SAUBHAG
Healthcare



SHREE RAJ SAUBHAG
Dental Clinic



SHREE RAJ SAUBHAG
**Environmental
Conservation**



SHREE RAJ SAUBHAG
Animal Welfare



—SHREE—
Raj Saubhag

Ashram

Near National Highway 8 - A,
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Dist. Surendranagar, Gujarat, India

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Tel: +91 2755 280533
Email: info@rajsaubhag.org
Website: www.rajsaubhag.org

How to Find Us

Raj Saubhag Ashram is located in Sayla town in Gujarat, India. The Ashram is just off National Highway 8A between Rajkot and Ahmedabad.

Railway Station

Surendranagar (45mins)
Ahmedabad (2hrs 30mins)

Airport

Rajkot (1hr 40 mins)
Ahmedabad Int Airport (2hrs 45 mins)



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