

DAT NEWS

Issue No. 1

(Quarterly Newsletter of the DTEA Alumni Trust)

April 2020

In the spotlight



R. Ravi Chandran

1982 Batch, Lodi Estate

Read the story of selfless dedication and extraordinary commitment of one of our alumni.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/ht-salutes-refused-to-take-leave-works-14-hour-days/story-UbJrTCGR0se00y4UofomSM.html>

The fraternity of MEA/DTEA alumni is truly proud of Ravi Chandran, who has gone beyond the call of duty to help the poor amid the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

An employee of the Delhi Government, Ravi Chandran was posted as the warden of shelter for migrant workers at Ghazipur in Delhi. Those who wish to contribute towards his efforts contact dtealumni@yahoo.com or dteaschools.alumni@gmail.com for details on how to reach your contributions to him.

Dear MEA/DTEA alumnus/alumna,

Greetings from the **DTEA Alumni Trust**.

STAY HOME

STAY SAFE

STAY HEALTHY

With this issue, the DTEA Alumni Trust (DAT) is launching an e-newsletter, called **DAT News**, which will bring to you, every quarter, information in detail about new activities – infrastructural, educational and other projects – that the Trust has been able to initiate at the DTEA Schools on behalf of MEA/DTEA alumni. We sincerely hope that you will go through this inaugural issue and give us your valuable feedback. Needless to say, we will try to incorporate your suggestions and improve the look and contents of DAT News in the forthcoming issues.

You would have received the last mailer that was sent in July 2019 to all the alumni registered on this website www.dtea-alumni.org and got to know of the activities that the Trust was engaged in at that time. Henceforth, such mailers will be sent every month but these will be brief. Besides highlighting other matters, these mailers will also alert you about any new issue of the newsletter hosted on the website, along with very brief information about its contents.

Thanks to the generous contributions from the alumni – financial and otherwise -- the Trust has been able to implement various projects for our *alma mater* from time to time. The schools need to be assisted in multifarious ways and the Trust needs your continuous support and help, especially ideas, for initiating new projects.

A. Projects Currently Ongoing and on the Anvil

I. Educational

As mentioned in the mailer of July 2019, on the Education front, the following projects are being implemented at the different schools. These are being funded by donations from alumni and other well wishers. These are activity-based projects aimed at improving foundational skills in language and mathematics among children of classes I and II.

- a. **Project Varsha** at Lodi Estate;
- b. **Project Meera** at Mandir Marg; and,
- c. **Project Chitti** at Lakshmi Bai Nagar.

As had been planned, **Project Udaan**, conceived on lines similar to the above three, did start off on July 20, 2019 soon after the last mailer was sent. Since then, the project has been progressing satisfactorily thanks to the untiring efforts of Ms. Malini Sivaram (**not** an alumna) who has been voluntarily extending her assistance in executing some of the educational programmes initiated by the Trust. (For **Udaan** photos and videos, see <https://photos.app.goo.gl/epM1Aer4fBgKLapi8>). Similarly, as had been mentioned earlier, the pilot project towards improving foundational mathematics among children of classes I and II, with support and guidance from the NGO '**Jodo**

Gyan', also kicked off at the DTEA School, RK Puram, in July 2019. (For **Jodo Gyan** photos, see <https://photos.app.goo.gl/wF4wG5kwwHkMDsiM9>).

The Trust would like to place on record its appreciation and gratitude to Ms. Sivaram for the help rendered by her in implementing the above two new programmes.

Thanks to the initiative of alumni who had conceptualized and initiated projects **Varsha** and **Meera**, plans to start similar activity-based learning programmes at the Pusa Road and Janakpuri schools from April 2020 had been finalised. While the Pusa Road School already has an activity room, a suitable activity room had to be created at the Janakpuri School. An appropriate room for the purpose too had been identified which only had to be refurbished with some civil and carpentry work. If COVID-19 had not intervened in such unprecedented ways, these projects would have started off as had been planned. But these would surely take off once the situation eases and conditions become conducive. We hope that this would happen soon and the projects can start by July at least.

II. Nutrition and Health

The proposal to replicate **Project Nutrition**, which has been going on at DTEA Moti Bagh since 2017, in the other DTEA Schools has not yet materialized for reasons of logistics, including identifying appropriate suppliers of items such as bananas on a daily basis from areas around the other schools, though the proposal is still very much on the table.

In association with Rotary Club of Central Delhi, the Trust held cardiac health check up campaigns for children of primary classes (1-5) at the DTEA Schools of Lodi Estate and Laxmibai Nagar in July and December 2019 respectively. Each campaign was conducted over a 3-day period covering 250-300 children in each school. The Rotary Club of Central Delhi has an ongoing international project called Gift of Life Outreach (GOLO) that identifies primary children schools having cardiac health issues and extends subsequent treatment where necessary free of any expense. A similar campaign was to be held at DTEA RK Puram as well during March but had to be postponed because of closure of schools in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This too will be taken up once schools reopen. See <https://photos.app.goo.gl/aq7rQ5bbmS2CAFYG9> and <https://photos.app.goo.gl/S87YYUJdZv2QJ9Ex6> for pictures of the campaigns held at LE and LBN respectively.

III. Infrastructure

As had been envisaged in the earlier mail, Phase II of the RK Puram School renovation project could not unfortunately be started immediately after July 2019 primarily due to lack of adequate funds. But, following its fund mobilization efforts, when the Trust was ready with funds by about November 2019, the contractors became busy elsewhere, and they became available only in February. The work was scheduled to begin March but COVID-19 put paid to our plans. So this too has to wait till the pall of COVID-19 clears.

A major achievement on the infrastructure front was the execution of solar power project at the Moti Bagh School early this year. An offer was made to the Trust by a non-alumni group Milaap, which had raised about Rs. 1.7 lakh through the crowd sourcing efforts of a school boy, for joining hands to execute a solar power project at the Moti Bagh School. The Trust decided to put in the rest 70% of the requisite amount for a 10 kW plant. The plant would have gone on stream in March but for the disruptions due to COVID-19. Once the lockdown lifts, grid connectivity would be established and the school should begin to save about 75% on its power bills. Some repair work also got done at the Lodi Estate School during December-January, like fixing of broken windows, doors and classroom cupboards as well as replacing broken window panes.

Besides the pending renovation work at the RK Puram School, which now in its ambit includes provisioning for dedicated water supply for fire safety, and the refurbishing of rooms to establish an activity room at the Janakpuri School, there is urgent need for implementing rain water harvesting systems in three schools -- RK Puram, Mandir Marg and Pusa Road -- solar power systems in three schools -- Laxmi Bai Nagar, Mandir Marg and Janakpuri -- and fire safety systems (which involve masonry, elaborate plumbing and electrical works) in all the schools.

But we need to mobilize funds for all these, and a fairly substantial sum at that -- upwards of Rs. 50 lakhs. So the Trust earnestly solicits contributions from the alumni for taking up these infrastructure projects. Please treat this as an appeal for donations from the alumni.

The Trust is proud to share with you all that it has received individual contributions from our alumni ranging from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 7 lakhs. Some of them are recurring donors. Many others too have been donating smaller amounts regularly. The various completed projects and the ongoing ones bear testimony to their contributions. On behalf of the larger alumni fraternity, the Trust places on record the gratitude and indebtedness to their generosity. The procedure for making donations is spelt out on the website www.dtea-alumni.org.

B. Website Matters

1. Change of registration form on the website:

The alumni registration form on the website has now been greatly simplified, with very few fields to fill in. Alumni who have forgotten their log-in ID or password are requested to re-register through this new simpler proforma. We, at the Trust end, would delete the duplicate entries (the old ones) in the course of regular monitoring of the website. This is being done in the hope that this simplified process should enable more and more alumni to register on the website who can then stay informed about the Trust's activities in the schools through mailers and newsletters. Please urge ALL your DTEA contacts who are yet to register on the website www.dtea-alumni.org to do so at the earliest.

2. Separate web pages for alumni achievers and former DTEA teachers:

While we have located quite a few achievers from amongst our alumni (whose list is at present accessible at the home page), we plan to devote a dedicated web page wherein their photographs will also be included, perhaps with more details about them than their current descriptions. We do have a list of teachers (retired), which also we plan to place on a separate web page. Please let us know the contact details of former teachers that you may be aware of along with their contact details wherever available.

We still find that the number of registrations is NOT increasing at the desired pace presumably because most alumni feel that staying connected with their own WhatsApp/Google/Yahoo groups is good enough. Please understand that only when alumni contact details are in a common database, such as the one on the website www.dtea-alumni.org, you can be informed of activities of alumni concerning affairs of the DTEA Schools and stay updated. Besides, a new registrant of a particular batch may not be in touch with any of his/her classmates to be part of these social media groups. So, it is our earnest request to you to get your friends and other contacts who are alumni of the DTEA Schools to register on the website. **IT IS EASY, IT IS FREE and OPEN TO ALL MEA/DTEA ALUMNI.**

C. Centenary Celebrations 2023

We are getting closer to the Centenary year 2023 of our *alma mater* -- only 3 years left. It is time that we ALL put in our little bit to increase the numbers on the website so that, together, we can exchange views and ideas to put a up a grand CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS show.

D. Miscellany

In our earlier mail, we had requested for volunteers to assist the Trust as co-ordinators in different aspects of its activities:

1. Alumni based in Delhi can volunteer to help in overseeing/monitoring the execution of different infrastructural projects being carried out by the Trust;
2. As mentioned in the last mailer, at present there are 10 trustees in Delhi and one in Mumbai and one in Chennai. Capt. T. V. Raghuraman (1967 LE) in Chennai, V. K. Varadarajan (1967 MM) in Bengaluru and Brig. (Retd.) T. V. Ramakrishnan (1960 LE) in Hyderabad extend their assistance in coordinating alumni activities in these respective places. The Trust would like to identify such coordinators in other major cities in India and countries, such as the USA and the UK, where many of DTEA/MEA alumni work and/or reside, who would interact with the Trust from time to time, exchange ideas and help in increasing awareness about alumni activities among the 30,000-odd alumni spread the world over.
3. Specifically, the Trust would welcome alumni volunteers who can undertake the task of compiling information and producing this newsletter
4. Please contact the Trust for the same through any of the following email IDs:
dtealumni@yahoo.com; dteaschools.alumni@gmail.com
5. Please feel free to interact/suggest/complain by email at the above IDs.



Project UDAAN at DTEA Moti Bagh



Jodo Gyan at DTEA RK Puram



Cardiac Health Check-up at DTEA Laxmibai Nagar

DTEA ALUMNI TRUST (Regd.)

804, Sahyog Building, 58, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019

Obituaries

Dr. V. Mahalakshmi, 1967 LE, passed away in January 2020 in Chennai

Mr. R. Krishnan, 1967 LBN, passed away in March 2020 in Chennai

Mr. K. V. Vijayan, 1968 LE, passed away in April 2020 in Lagos, Nigeria

Mr. V. Suresh, 1963 MM, passed away in April 2020 in New Delhi

Mr. A. Narayanan, 1962 LE, passed away in April 2020 in Chennai

Mr. N. R. Srinivasan, 1954 MM, passed away in April 2020 in Mumbai

Alumtoon

