

# Taaro ke Bacche

A school for children  
with autism & Down's syndrome

Children of the stars

तारों के बच्चे



in Varanasi (India)

## Newsletter – April 2021

### News from the association in Geneva

The Children of the Stars or Taaro ke Bacche Association and its committee has continued its administrative and fundraising activities since December 2020 so that its work can continue.

Times are difficult in Geneva and Benares, both economically and in terms of the strength and perseverance required to stay the course...

We extend our sincere gratitude to all our donors, both private and public: Mrs. Solange Demole-Fondation Albatros, Cerutti-Toitures SA, the Hayoz and C. Fabre families, the City of Geneva - *Ville Solidaire*, and the municipalities of Bellevue, Collonges-Bellerive, Cologny, Dardagny, Jussy, Lancy, and Thônex.

The search for private and public donors is also an important aspect of Marie-Françoise's activity when she is in Geneva, supported by Corinne Grand and Patricia Bell.

The date of the next Annual General Assembly has not yet been fixed. It could take place at the end of May after Marie-Françoise's return, which is expected to be around mid-May if all goes well.

### News from the school in Varanasi

Marie-Françoise returned to Benares on November 28, 2020.

After quarantining at home, she was finally able to go to the school and meet the teachers and administrative staff. While it was a source of joy for all, there was also a particular atmosphere resulting from the current crisis we are going through: schools closed for nine months... job insecurity ... the price of basic commodities increasing dramatically...

After an absence of more than eight months, Marie-Françoise had planned several days of meetings to discuss both the educational and administrative aspects of the Centre.



During this period, the educators were also preparing material to give to the families during the home visits scheduled after Christmas.

We continued to follow the families and to offer them support on a daily basis during this period.



*Nishant on his bicycle*



*Atarva doing yoga*

It was also urgent to replace our psychologist and one of our educators who had to leave us for family reasons.

Marie-Françoise contacted her circle of friends in Benares to let them know and was pleasantly surprised to receive spontaneous applications for these posts; we have interviewed Vidisha, a young psychologist with professional experience in autism.

On February 8, the school reopened on alternate days, the children having been divided into two groups, and on March 1st we were able to resume a normal schedule.



*Kartik & Aryan Seth*

The Early Intervention Programme (EIP) with three children and their mothers also reopened on this date.



*EIP : Bhaskar*



*EIP : Zavien*

While the children were very happy to see us after having had to stay home for almost a year, we could not help but notice that this absence had taken its toll on their behaviour. However, we were able gradually to re-introduce the necessary routine and educational structures...



We were also able to welcome a new pupil, Punyavrat, whose school had been definitively closed. This 12-year-old boy has a good potential to develop many cognitive and educational features.

It is with deep sorrow that we have to announce that on March 15 one of our most valued educators, Rakesh, died suddenly of a heart attack at the age of 38. His sudden departure was a great shock for the whole team and the families; Rakesh had been with us for three years... We would like to present our sincere condolences to his family.



We are currently in the process of recruiting new specialised educational staff.

Our capacity to welcome children at Taaro ke Bacche is overflowing!!! Two young children are on the waiting list for the EIP group. One of our projects for this autumn is to set up a pre-vocational workshop for three of our older children who have reached the age of 14.

Furthermore, Marie-Françoise is in contact with a group of researchers from the Benaras Hindu University who are working on genetics, rare diseases and autism, as well as with political personalities in Benares who are committed to the cause of autism.



This recognition, in Benares, of the need for specific care for persons with autism is a source of deep satisfaction for Marie-Françoise. It was one of her objectives in creating Taaro ke Bacche! Their needs are considerable, whether in the follow-up of children and families, adequate training of professionals or material help. However, let us not fail to recognize the efforts of the parents and staff who, against all odds, have stayed the course...

While thanking you again for your invaluable support, Marie-Françoise would also like to remind you of the association's post office account. Every penny counts...

#### **Our address**

ENFANTS DES ETOILES ou Taaro ke Bacche  
1224 Chêne-Bougerie – Switzerland

#### **Our websites**

[www.enfantsdesetoiles.ch](http://www.enfantsdesetoiles.ch)  
[www.taarokebacche.in](http://www.taarokebacche.in)

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