

Auroville May 2014

Dear Friends and Donors,

At Deepam we are confronted with the fact that **we are receiving more small children** who come accompanied by their parents for very time-intensive therapeutic treatments. It is most wonderful when these children need to come only for a limited period of time and become independent of our continuous support. However the ones with more severe special needs have often to be integrated into our daycare group where they also receive educational classes.

In addition, **the older program participants require vocational training.** A few of the ones who started with us in 1992 - when we were working under the trees - are now around thirty years old. In the past years we have trained some of them in candle-making, greeting card creation, embroidery, stitching, and household and garden work. While several of them will never be able to manage in the outside world, we aim to equip some of them early on with skills which will enable them to lead an independent life in the future.



This January we started a **project in woodworking.**

We chose to produce a **set of about 800 building blocks** of different shapes and sizes. Temporarily we have employed a carpenter who had already pre-cut and planed the wood. Our trainees are split into smaller groups and very proudly sandpaper and wax these blocks. With this project we are able to offer training to our youth and adults while simultaneously receiving very beautiful, unique play-blocks which will be used by our children in the future for many years to come.

In February we were able to enjoy the shining faces of our children during the **first train ride in their lives** – from Pondicherry to the next junction where they could watch the long-distance trains. Afterwards we went for a delicious picnic under a scenic banyan tree and a boat ride on a lake. This was an unforgettable day for all of us. For five year old **Vinoth**, who has a profound hearing loss, this was his first outing with us and he visibly enjoyed it. It was a delight to watch the transformation in **Akash**, who is mentally challenged with autistic features. He was so relaxed, smiling and participating compared to the year before when he was still extremely stiff and tense.



Akash

Vinoth



