

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24



**SHISHU
SAROTHI**





SHISHU
SAROTHI

ABOUT US

Shishu Sarothi Centre for Rehabilitation & Training for Multiple Disability is a non-profit organization working in Assam and North East India **since 1987**, towards enabling and empowering children and persons with disabilities through a range of services to ensure their inclusion and full participation in society.

VISION

An inclusive world where all people with disabilities – children, women, and men – live on equal terms with respect and dignity, enjoy their rights and fundamental freedoms, and are valued as a part of human diversity and humanity.

MISSION

To uphold and advocate for the rights of children and persons with disabilities, ensure equal opportunities, and promote their inclusion and full participation in a non-discriminating barrier-free society.

VALUES

Equality, sensitivity, accountability, and commitment.

THEMATIC AREAS

- HEALTH
- EDUCATION
- AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY
- RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



**KETAKI
BARDALAI**

Executive Director,
Shishu Sarothi

2023-24 was a productive year for *Shishu Sarothi*, as we worked hard to improve and expand our work across all the thematic areas.

We added new locations for our **Health-related Early Intervention** work, at the DEIC at Rangia, the ant's MITA program at Rowmari, Chirang, and the PHC OPD at Ponka, Numaligarh. The youngest high-risk baby served was just 1 day old! And we saw an exponential growth of children with **ASD** and **ADHD** availing our services.

Wide-ranging work was done in the Education domain across programs and services.

Our **Centre for Education** provides inclusive early childhood education, and special education with a focus on those with high support needs, through the holistic centre and home-based services, covering the critical development domains in classroom and home settings. Our students shone in sports and arts events. Parents were empowered with information and access to Govt schemes, and we counselled our mothers to address the acute anxiety and stress they undergo. Our **Vocational Training Unit** trained youth with and without disabilities in papercraft and screen printing. Their products were sold and displayed at *Diya Kala Melas* and other events, with the trainees receiving a share of the profits from sales proceeds. The **SPARSH program and Deafblind Resource Centre** reached children and persons with Deafblindness and Multi-Sensory Impairment through centre- and home-based services.

The team also sensitized NGOs and led advocacy and network-building programs in different states of NE India. Over a crore of funds was disbursed towards fees and other support under the **Indus Towers Scholarship Program**. The **Training wing** conducted formal certificate and diploma courses and resource support was regularly provided to Samagra Shiksha Axom (SSA) for their Inclusive Education functionaries. We **promoted Inclusive Education**, in SSA schools in Kamrup (M) and Karbi Anglong by sensitizing and training teachers in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies and are preparing a compendium of Lesson Plans. In Karbi Anglong we engaged actively with communities for a more focused involvement in 30 SSA schools. We wrapped up a 2nd cohort of the **English Access Micro-Scholarship Program** with 50 students in Guwahati and Shillong learning English and life skills through active community engagement and immersion activities on culture, ecology, climate change etc.

The **Awareness and Advocacy** work of the **Disability Law Unit** facilitated access to Ayushman Bharat cards, wrote appeals and representations, and provided litigation support to aggrieved persons with disabilities. They also built capacities and confidence for self-advocacy with the *Bijoyini* network of women with disabilities. A regional consultation was followed by a pre-election social media campaign on political participation and accessible electoral process. As empaneled Access Auditors we carried out Access Audits and promoted accessibility with the tourism sector in Assam.

The envisioned **Regional Resource Centre for Disability Studies and Action** is being actualized with rolling out a series of short and long-term training courses, holding regional and state-level consultations, and signing agreements with NGOs and academic institutions, while actively following up with the Dept. of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt of Assam, for speedy completion of the civil construction of the infrastructure.

We remain ever grateful to our new and old members, numerous donors, supportive funders, legal professionals, and Govt officials and authorities without whose help, none of this would have been possible. Warm gratitude goes to the media for highlighting our concerns and our work. A big shoutout to all my colleagues, whose tireless toil has made all these possible and opened new doorways for our work.

HEALTH

Daily direct services at *Shishu Sarothi*, CRC Guwahati and Pediatrics Dept AMCH Dibrugarh were provided to **1377 new** children and we **followed up** with **581** previously enrolled children

Outreach services at *Shishu Bikash Kendra*, Goalpara, DEIC Golaghat and OPD Ponka, Numaligarh, DEIC Rangiya & Sibsagar, and at 'the ant' Chirang reached **294 new** children and we **followed up** with **134** previously enrolled children.

703 children were below 6 months of age – the youngest child was just *1 day old!*

El services were provided to **240** children with **Cerebral Palsy**, **108** children with **ASD & ADHD**, **129** children with **Intellectual Disabilities** were reached by the Early Intervention team in addition to children with other developmental delays and disabilities.”



2386

Children reached



1671

New children enrolled



715

Children followed up



EDUCATION CENTRE FOR EDUCATION

200 children enrolled at the Centre for Education received School Readiness & Inclusive Early Childhood Education, Special Education services with special focus on children with High Support Needs.

ACTIVITIES **SNAPSHOT**

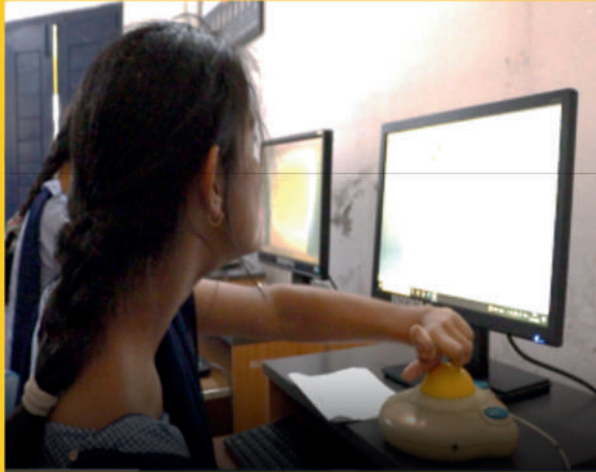
- * **1184** classes, **604** therapy sessions
- * **10** parent empowerment programs, **2** camps for *Aadhar/Ayushman* card registration.
- * **41** counselling and **58** parent support group sessions.
- * **255** home visits for **20** children with High Support Needs
- * **169** staff members of **8** schools were sensitized and given follow-up support.
- * **4** Community Sensitization programs reached **430** participants.
- * **5** Alumni meet-up programs held; **2** Self Help groups incubated.
- * **2** Mini Research Studies conducted.

**Inclusive
Early Childhood
Education
School readiness**

**Special
Education
NIOS
(OBE/Secondary)
Functional Literacy**

**High Support
Needs**
Focus on quality of life
Family & Caregiver
support

ACHIEVERS



Sanjana Deb

Sanjana Deb student in our Functional Academics Unit, has made great progress from being a beginner with no computer experience to quickly learning to use a trackball mouse despite her condition of cerebral palsy and mild intellectual disability. She now switches on the computer, opens Microsoft Word, types in bold and italics fonts, can underline, change fonts, and use colours and designs too.

6-year-old **Mridupaban Das** of the Special Teaching Unit was struggling with various physical, cognitive, and social challenges on account of his Down Syndrome diagnosis. With targeted educational and therapy support over time he has made significant progress with his gross and fine motor skills. He has learned to identify colours, shapes, and letters and has begun following 2-step commands.



Mridupaban Das

His language and communication skills have advanced to using simple words and gestures, and he now engages socially and participates in group activities. He can manage some self-help tasks such as eating, drinking, and washing his hands independently and with prompts. We are tracking Mridupaban's remarkable journey and growing independence.

EDUCATION FOR THE DEAFBLIND



76 children and persons with *Deaf-blindness (Db)* and *Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)* were served by the **SPARSH program** and a host of stakeholders reached by the *Deafblind Resource Centre (DbRC)*

- * **182** regular centre and home-based service sessions provided.
- * **19** new children enrolled ; **4** received assistive devices.
- * **10** persons underwent clinical assessment; vision and hearing function assessments done for **47** children.
- * **25** persons given nutritional support; **40** parents and children taken for Exposure Visit.
- * **81** participants from **15 NGOs** attend state and regional level sensitization programs on Deaf-blindness in Assam and Tripura.
- * **57** persons including Adults with Deaf-blindness (ADb) attended a state level Advocacy meeting.



EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Indus Towers Scholarship Program

supports students with disabilities across NE India and beyond to pursue their dreams of higher education.

800+ students received financial support for tuition fees as well as additional support since the program's inception in 2016.



- * **180** student scholars selected in 2023-24 session to pursue higher studies in educational institutions in NE India. **162** were from NE and 18 from the rest of India.
- * **Rs. 93.2** Lakhs disbursed for fees.
- * **Rs. 16.2** Lakhs provided for additional support.
- * **174** students completed their course by end of **2023-24**.

TRIUMPH THROUGH ADVERSITY THE INSPIRING JOURNEY OF **AZMAL HUSSAIN**



Azmal Hussain, journey epitomizes the transformative power of education and unwavering determination. A beacon of resilience, amidst adversity and financial hardships and challenges posed by his hearing impairment, he demonstrated exceptional merit in realizing his dream of pursuing higher education at the Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi, with the Indus Towers Scholarship Program (ITSP). His exemplary performance in the UPSC CSE 2023 examinations, earning an impressive All India Rank (AIR) 1013, underscores his indomitable spirit. *Azmal's* story is an inspiration to others to persevere, and embrace strengths, rather than dwell on weaknesses and focus on inherent capabilities.

EDUCATION TRAINING

'Shishu Sarothi offers formal and customized trainings for all stakeholders. We are an approved Training Institution under the Rehabilitation Council of India since 2003 and have conducted numerous courses to create a cadre of trained special educators for Assam and NE. We also regularly conduct customized training programs and provide resource support to other institutions from time to time.'

25/26 students in 2nd batch completed the 6-month Certificate Course on **Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID)**.

32 students enrolled in the 2-year Diploma Course in **Special Education on Multiple Disability (D.Ed -SE-MD)**.

Resource Support to NIPCCD, IGNOU and SSA for module design and deployment of training for CDPOs, AW Supervisors, School Teachers, SSA -IE functionaries on **Inclusive Education, Universal Design of Learning, Early Childhood Education**.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Vocational skills are imparted to **youth with disabilities (18+ years)** in papercraft and related areas. A parallel Sheltered Workshop produces various aesthetically designed products sold directly and at exhibitions and fairs and profits from sales income are shared with trainees involved in production activities.

- * **41** trainees underwent a **3-month** certificate course in batches on papercraft and screen printing.
- * An income of **Rs. 169367/-** was generated from the sale of production of which **Rs. 56,250/-** was disbursed to the trainees to promote financial independence.
- * Parents are also often actively involved in the training.
- * Products were showcased and sold at *Divya Kala Melas* in Guwahati and Agartala and various other local exhibitions, by the trainees and staff members



EDUCATION

PROMOTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

A two year program to orient and sensitize SSA schoolteachers, students and communities was carried out in *Kamrup Metro* and *Karbi Anglong* districts from **2021 to 2023**. A parallel program deepened the work in *Karbi Anglong* and *West Karbi Anglong* districts.

*Promoting **Inclusive Education** with SSA schoolteachers in **Kamrup (M)** and **Karbi Anglong***

- **4621** students including **52** students with disabilities covered in **21** schools.
- **160** Teachers and **461** Additional Teachers trained in *Universal Design for Learning (UDL)* to improve learning outcomes.
- **200** Lesson Plans collated into a compendium.
- **1500+** community members sensitized.
- Student engagement activities conducted to promote *child participation and inclusion*.

*Inclusive Education in **Karbi Anglong** and **West Karbi Anglong***

- **646** school visits, **38** SMC meetings, **107** Home visits, **35** Community Outreach Programs, **19** Inclusive Events.
- **50%** increase in student attendance.
- Enhanced Mother's groups and parental involvement.
- **4998** community members engaged.
- Advocacy with SMC led to construction of boundary wall and makeshift classrooms in **2 schools** by communities.
- Improved **Gunotsav** ratings.

In Karbi Anglong, **advocacy** with School Management and Village Education Committees led to the voluntary **construction of a boundary wall and makeshift classrooms** in 2 schools by community members. A **Farm Talks** initiative connected local farmers with students, enriching education with traditional knowledge on sustainable practices.

Teacher feedback indicates the benefits of a strength-based approach and UDL strategies, leading to more engaging and effective teaching evident from **improved Gunotsav ratings**.



Aroti Rongpi exemplary teacher who even bathes, cleans, and feeds the children to encourage them to come to school



Anjali Teronpi initiated community schools during the pandemic to minimize learning gaps; make learning joyful and relevant



Gopal Poddar mobilizes resources for school dev from parents, communities, alumni, etc.

EDUCATION OTHER PROGRAMS

English Access Micro-scholarship Program

A comprehensive **2-year**, non-academic, out-of-school, weekend program supported by the US Consulate, was implemented for a cohort of **50 young students** from disadvantaged backgrounds in *Guwahati and Shillong*. The focus is on building English language proficiency, critical thinking, leadership qualities, democratic values, and global citizenship alongside exposure to Indian and American culture and immersive activities.

- **50** students (*25 in Guwahati and 25 in Shillong*) completed the **2 year program**.
- **90+** Curriculum based instructional classes were held in *Guwahati*, **70+** in *Shillong*.
- Instructional Camps focused on *Climate Change, Waste Management, Disability Awareness*.
- Joint Exposure trips to *Deepor Beel, Sacred Groves* and *Biodiversity conservation* projects at *Umiam*, a Waste recycling station at *Akshar Forum Model School*, and river cleaning community services were conducted.
- Regular visits and supervision by **US Consulate** and **RELO** officials were made to take stock and interact with students

- Graduation ceremonies showcasing transformative learning through performances, and alumni testimonials held in Shillong and Guwahati attended by **US Consul General Melinda Pavek**.



Visit to **Barsapara**
Landfill



Study trip to
Sacred Grove in
Mawphlang



Graduation
Ceremony **Guwahati**



Graduation
Ceremony **Shillong**

AWARENESS & ADVOCACY

The Disability Law Unit of Shishu Sarothi is involved in raising awareness and promoting legal literacy, among rights holders on rights and for duty bearers on responsibilities, as well as providing legal counsel and litigation support to redress grievances of persons with disabilities. Despite the absence of funding currently, the unit has remained steadfast in its efforts to advocate for empowerment, promote a barrier-free environment, and ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in the region.

- **28** persons with disabilities benefit from *Ayushman Bharat card* registration facilitation camp with cards for insurance coverage of **Rs. 5 lakhs** annually.
- Observation of International Day of Persons with Disabilities **2023** with a Panel Discussion highlighting accessibility and mainstreaming disability issues.
- **Written appeals and representations** made on discriminatory practices in educational institutions; difficulties in Aadhar card applications.
- **Litigation support** provided to aggrieved for discrimination in availing *poverty alleviation schemes (PMAY)*; denial of employment benefits to an *in-service Govt official acquiring disability*; compensation to the family of a child acquiring disability after immunization.
- **Awareness programs** were conducted for a range of stakeholders on disability certification and Aadhar card registration, gender-based violence, domestic violence, sexual harassment, SHSR, RPD & POCSO Acts and government schemes for persons with disabilities.
- **Awareness Campaign** on *Inclusion and Participation in Election Processes* was taken up in the region.
- Renewal of **Empanelment as Access Auditor** under Accessible India campaign and conduct of Access Audit for *Kamakhya Temple* under the Prasad Scheme (Min of Tourism).



COMPOSITE REGIONAL CENTRE (NE) FOR DISABILITY STUDIES AND ACTION

Mooted during participatory discussions with other organizations and govt authorities, the **Composite Regional Centre (NE) for Disability Studies & Action (CRC-NE-DSA)** is envisioned as a unique hub of information and learning on disability-related matters for NE India. With Infrastructure construction support from the **North Eastern Council & Dept. of Social Justice & Empowerment of Govt of Assam** and internal capacity building and piloting of training program design and deployment from Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

- A short course on **“Understanding Built-Environment Accessibility”** was conducted for **28** students of the *Guwahati College of Architecture & Planning* in *September, 2023*.
- An **UMMEED**-curated course "Playing Made Easy" was held for **30** parents and caregivers in Sep 2023.
- **2** workshops on Inclusive Education were conducted – at *Kohima* in Sep 2023 for **45** teachers in collaboration with *Bumblebee Inclusive School* and *SCPD, Nagaland*; and at *Alphonsa Inclusive School, Bongaigaon* in Oct 2023.
- A long course, **“Community Leadership in Disability”** to build skills in self-advocacy, commenced in Feb 2024 with **14** participants from **4 NE states**.
- A series of training programs were held for **292** SSA teachers in *Baithalangso* and *Donkamukh* in *Karbi Anglong* in July-Aug 2023 and at *Guwahati Urban Block* in Feb 2024 on Inclusive Education, Universal Design for Learning & Lesson Planning, Using ICT, Provisions of the **RPwD Act**, **Autism Awareness** and on **Deaf-blindness**.
- Resource support was provided to *Mrinaljyoti Rehabilitation Centre (MRC)* at a sensitization workshop on disability and accessibility for **27** district officials of Tinsukia district in Jan 2024 and the *Voluntary Health Association of Tripura (VHAT)* on **“Early Identification of Disability among Children”** in Jan 2024, for **160** ASHA and Anganwadi Workers from West Tripura and Sepahijala districts in Tripura.
- Internal training programs were organized on *Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN)*, *Behavior Management*, *ICF Framework on Assessment & Intervention for Delayed Development & Disabilities*, *Punarjani Software*, *WHO - Caregivers Skills Training (CST)*, *Effective Online Tools*, *Building Documentation skills*, and *Strategy Design & Implementation Workshops*.
- State-level Consultations were held in **Mizoram** in Oct 2023 with **Zoram Entu Pawl**, and **NCPEDP** to advocate for political participation of persons with disabilities ahead of the November Elections and in Tripura in Dec 2023 with **VHAT and Govt. of Tripura**, to raise awareness on accessible built environment amongst officials of concerned departments.

**LIFE MEMBERS**

Suresh Kumar Agarwalla
Subhash Ch Agarwalla
Manoj Kumar Agarwal
Sarat Kumar Jain
Dr. Harsha Bhattacharjee
Madhu Goenka
Ramesh Goenka
Subhash Chandra Das
Satyamrit Kagti

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Neha Khemka
Rishi Agarwal
Aayush Choudhury
Ashish Deorah
Sanjay Poddar
Umang Mittal
Amit Agarwal

GENERAL MEMBERS

Saroj Khemka
Rita Chhawchharia
Smita Kasera
Sarita Sikaria
Sangeeta Kejriwal
Sushila Gupta
Suman Sikaria
Ashish Deorah

CORPORATE MEMBER GOLD

Nipon Kumar Talukdar

CORPORATE MEMBER PLATINUM

Nezone Pipes & Structures

INTERNSHIPS, VOLUNTEERS, & RESEARCHERS

60 students from **21** educational institutions across India *interned at Shishu Sarothi*. **6** students from **4** educational institutions *volunteered at Shishu Sarothi*. **123** physiotherapy students from **3** institutions completed their *Clinical Posting*. **6** researchers from **6** educational institutions did *research studies at Shishu Sarothi*.

FUNDERS AND INSTITUTIONAL DONORS

ARDI Enterprise, Assam Hospitals Limited; Azim Premji Foundation Bhagwati Sai Metal Alloys, Bitchem Asphalt Technologies Limited; Directorate of Social Justice & Empowerment Govt of Assam; Dream Tours & Travels, Dulal Art, Human Capability Foundation; IndiGo Reach, Indus Towers Limited; JM Electronics; Late GD Damani Charitable Trust; Light for the World – International; Meghalaya Cements; Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment; North East Small Finance Bank Ltd; Numaligarh Refinery Limited; Oscar Foundation; Patwary & Company; Paul Hamlyn Foundation; Perfect Writing Instruments P Ltd; RD Store Textiles; Rehabilitation Council of India; Sense International India; Shree Mangalam Medicos; Society for Empowerment and Service, Australia; Star Cement; US Consulate Kolkata; Win Power Ltd; Wipro Foundation; Women's Fund Asia

DONATION BOX LOCATIONS

7th Heaven
AI Care
Apollo Excel Care Hospital
Arya Hospital
Govindam
Makhan Bhog
Nemcare Hospitals
Nega Best
Sohum Emporio
Sohum Shoppe

SPONSORSHIPS FOR CHILDREN

Prerana IAS Officers' Wives Association
Bidisha Borkotoky

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

SHISHU
SAROTHI



A Chaliha
Abhishek Shah
Abhyanandan Medhi
Ajai Kumar Sahgal
Ajay Bawa
Akash Guha
Akhil Paul
Akshay Singh
Alia B
Anahita Bardalai
Aniruddha Bagchi
Angira Mimani
Anima Barua
Anjana Kakoti
Anjou Chopra
Anju Agarwal Das
Ankur Gupta
Anupam Agarwal
Anuradha Hussain
Arati Sharma
Archana Agarwal
Arnabjyoti Das
Arpit Agarwal
Arun Hariharan
Arun Kumar Kaul
Ashawari Talukdar
Ashok Singh
Atul Kunwar
Bhumi Dugar
Bidyut B Baniah
Binapani Das
Col M Pratap Singh
Damandeep Sidhu
Darsh Agarwal
Dev Kumar Singh
Dibyajyoti Dutta
Diganta Narayan Das
Dipali Gogoi Kalita
Dipankar Medhi
Dipesh Bhagabati
Dipjyoti & Mili Mahanta
Dr. Gyanendra Tak
Dr. Nivedita Deka
Dr. Latika
Dr. Sharadi Shreemoyee
Dr. Tanwi Shams
Dr. Tonmoy Das
Enakshi Dutta
Geeteshwari Singh
Gitartha Baruah
Gunjan Dugar
Viveck Crishna
Warvanu

Harsh Dugar
Harshinderpal S Brar
Indu Lakhotia
Jasjit Mann
Jasdeep S Ahluwalia
Jayant Bardalai
Jayanta Barooah
Jitram Dutta
Lakshmi Rajgopal
Jugal Das
Justice Biplab K Sharma
Jyoti Das
Jyoti Shikha
Kalyanee Boruah
Kavita Charanji
Keya Bardalai
Kausar Jamil Hilaly
Krishan Katyal
Kruta Kalita
Kuddush Ahmed
Lonie Chaliha
Loni Talukdar
Manas Saikia
Manish
Manoj Bansal
Maya Bawri
Mitali Phookan
Mitul Tuli
Molina Das
Naitik Dugar
Nalin Agarwal
N R Srinivasan
Nibedita Barua
Nidhi Agarwal
Nihal Pegu
Nikhil Bansal
Nirajita Srinivasan
Nirupama Jodhani
Oisho Bani Society
Olena Ostrychen
Padmini Boruah
Pallabi Baruah
Pallavi Barua
Pallabi Dutta
Pankaj Kumar
Pankaj Madhok
Peenaaz Kashyap Das
Piya Srinivasan
Prasanta P Agarwala
Preeti Priyam Sharma
Poonam Bansal
Writusmita
Yash Bansal

Poornima Talwalker
Pradip Jain
Prerit Patodia
Pritam Talukdar
Radhika Chopra
Raghav Bardalai
Raghav Lall
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Ramesh Nambiar
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Sidhanth Tuli
Simi Arun Pandey
Subrita
Sujata
Sushma Agarwal
Suvira Das
Sriram Srinivasan
Tapan
Threeste
Tiara Jew
Uma Bordoloi Singh
Utpala Rajchoudhury
Utpala Roy
Vineet Katyal
Vishatha Agarwal
Vish M Sowani

MEDIA MENTIONS

SHISHU SAROTHI



Shishu Sarothi, SSA organise annual inclusive sports event

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Feb 12: To emphasise the importance of co-curricular activities equally along with academic activity, Shishu Sarothi in collaboration with the Santagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) organised a three-day 'Annual Inclusive Sports Event' for the students with and without disabilities recently.

The event was held at the Shishu Sarothi campus on February 8, and at the ITI Field on February 9 and 10.

News interesting, adopted games and sports were played that included Aerobic Walking, Cerebale, Nine Pin Bowling, Beach the Pie, Inclusive Football and Musical Chairs.

Kishore Thakuria, Director, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Assam, inaugurated the event by releasing balloons with the children and playing a round of Cerebale. He offered encouragement and best wishes for the success of the event.

Dinesh Choudhary along with Kamini Sharma, retired senior basketball coach of Sports

Authority of India (SAD) and member of the Assam Wheelchair Basketball Association, Akhil Bhasu and Rameshwar Saha, CRC, Patuli Ambari were the guests of honour who attended the closing ceremony and prize distribution function on the last day.

Dipika Choudhary expressed her satisfaction for the students with and without disabilities for promoting inclusion and creating an empathetic space for children with disabilities to learn joyfully. She also commended the parents on their fortitude and encouraged them to have faith in the abilities and potential of their children.

Kamini Sharma said he was happy to be a part of the occasion and congratulated the students for their enthusiastic participation in all the events and activities with true sporting spirit.

Students from SSA-affiliated schools Sri Anandadevi Vidy Mandir, Dakshin Guwahati High School, Anandini Narsing LP School, Birubari Rupnarayan Vidyalaya, and Bharhali LP School took active part in the sports event and

won accolades.

Playing games and participating in sports activities, helps children learn several skills in addition to the fitness and physical expertise of playing the sport. Children learn to take turns, make friends, express themselves creatively, adapt socially with peers, and build self-confidence. Studies also show that children with disabilities perform better in inclusive environments, learning alongside their peers without disabilities, developing friendships, and cultivating executive functioning skills. Inclusive sports activities allow young people to learn skills together and discover more about each other's similarities rather than differences.

"It is proven that inclusion helps the fear of difference. Inclusion, on the other hand, fuels acceptance. Students with and without disabilities learn and play side-by-side. This interaction supports the development of friendships, social inclusion, and develops learned discrimination and perseverance," a Shishu Sarothi spokesperson said.

Disability manifesto released for 2024 Lok Sabha Elections

GUWAHATI, March 15:

As a member of the National Disability Network, Shishu Sarothi was involved in contributing inputs from persons with disabilities across Assam and NE India to the collective 'Manifesto: For and By People with Disabilities' drawn up by the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) with inputs of persons with disabilities across the country mentioned a statement.

According to the statement, this historic initiative by NCPEDP calls on political parties to recognise persons with disabilities as a critical voting bloc, and urges them to prioritise the rights and interests of this marginalized community in their policy decisions.

By amplifying the voices and concerns of persons with disabilities, this manifesto seeks to create a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

It was translated into Assamese by Shishu Sarothi for widespread dissemination across Assam to empower persons with disabilities to participate more actively in the democratic process and advocate for their rights. It has been shared with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities in different districts and a team of young women and men with disabilities met and presented the Manifesto to candidates and officials from different political parties and the ground-breaking document serves as a guiding light for political parties, urging them to value the vote of individuals with disabilities and include them in their agenda for the 2024 General Elections said the statement.

The Manifesto includes the following key demands: persons with disabilities across the country to ensure that the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities, this manifesto seeks to create a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

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Graduation ceremony of English Access Microscholarship Program



GUWAHATI, March 8:

The graduation ceremony of the 2nd cohort of students of the English Access Microscholarship Program was held on March 8, 2024, at Shishu Sarothi's premises in Birubari, Guwahati. Supported by the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Consulate, Kolkata, this event marked the culmination of a 2-year programme and is a significant milestone in the educational journey of 25 bright, economically disadvantaged students from Guwahati as well as another 25 students from Shillong, who graduated earlier on March 7, 2024, at a ceremony in Shillong.

This programme aims to empower 50 students, with essential English language and soft skills through extracurricular classes and non-academic activities conducted on weekends over a 2-year period. The graduation ceremony today was graced by the accomplished and experienced Ms. Melinda Pavik, U.S. Consul General, Kolkata, along with other officials from the Consulate Kolkata.

During the programme, the students performed and showcased their learning and experiences, which included enhance-

ment and intensive immersive sessions, where they learned about climate change, waste management, and a host of other issues, which have helped to inculcate a sense of responsibility while informing and raising their awareness and competencies.

"Today, on the occasion of International Women's Day, I extend my warmest greetings to all. I am truly impressed by the remarkable skills, courage, poise, and confidence exhibited by the students. Their profound appreciation for cultural heritage is truly commendable. This programme has undoubtedly played a pivotal role in honing their talents and bringing out their best selves. It is about refining and shaping the inherent values that these students already possess. I urge them to embrace discomfort as a catalyst for growth, for it is through perseverance and effort that we evolve into better individuals. As these students embark on the next chapter of their journey, graduating from this esteemed institution, I see boundless opportunities awaiting them. I wish them the very best as they strive to become exem-

plary mentors and community leaders, armed with the values and education instilled in them. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the parents and teachers for their unwavering support throughout this journey. It is truly an honour to be present among such bright and promising individuals," Ms. Melinda Pavik, U.S. Consul General, Kolkata, said.

"We are inspired by how transformative this programme has been as the remarkable confidence of our students over this two-year program, was heartening to see they learned so much about climate change, pollution, and the value of kindness that will make them sensitive, responsible young adults in our community, state, and nation. I am grateful to the teachers, supportive parents, and team for the efforts and support. The smooth and easy presentation of the programme was a testament to the hard work, dedication, and expertise."

As we celebrate this milestone, I wish our students a bright and prosperous future of endless opportunities and successes." Ketaki Bardola, Executive Director, Shishu Sarothi

HC grants relief to girl for disability after vaccination

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Jan 4: After a decade-long legal battle, a case concerning the permanent disability of a girl after the administration of a vaccine has ended on a positive note.

The petitioner's daughter was born fit and healthy in the Sipahjar Public Health Centre on November 28, 2010, and had been administered all required vaccinations at the time of her birth. When the child was one and a half years old, she was administered vaccines, namely DPT-Booster, Measles-2nd Dose, and Vita A 2nd dose, at Anganwadi Centre in village Pat-giri Chuba under Khash Sonapur in the Darrang district. At the time of vaccination,

deteriorate, and after a while, she fainted.

Thereafter, she started suffering from a high fever and was not able to stand on her legs. The child was immediately admitted to Sipahjar PHC, later admitted to Gauhati Medical College Hospital (GMCH), and underwent treatment for almost three months. However, till the date of filing the writ petition in the year 2014, his daughter was not able to walk or sit and only lay on the bed.

As the father could not afford the necessary care, the Gauhati High Court directed authorities to pay an amount of Rs. 3,700 per month to engage a caretaker. The Court also directs the Commissioner and Secretary to the Government

count of the petitioner within a period of 30 days from the date of the judgement.

The Court further directed the Commissioner and Secretary to the Government of Assam, Health and Family Welfare Department, as well as the Mission Director, National Health Mission, to take effective steps so that the child is evaluated at least twice a year by a paediatrician till she attains the age of 18 and by a physician after she attains the age of 18. Further to that, the said authority shall also ensure that a neurologist of the GMCH provides the necessary consultations from time to time as per the needs of the victim and that medical treatment, as well as rehabilitation training that is pres-

NCPEDP, Shishu Sarothi, PwDs lay stress on inclusive electoral process

GUWAHATI, March 27: Urging all disabled voters to exercise their democratic rights to vote, experts on Wednesday highlighted the urgent need for large-scale awareness and for all stakeholders to come together to ensure our "democracy becomes more inclusive and enabling."

Shishu Sarothi, along with the country's leading disability rights non-profit, the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP), organized a stakeholders' consultation on Wednesday. Among others, it highlighted the imperative for political parties to understand and consider the needs of people with disabilities while emphasising the importance of individuals with disabilities being cognizant of their rights and potential as voters.

Ahead of the Lok Sabha

Elections 2024, the NCPEDP spearheads a series of regional consultations titled "Disabled People in Politics" across India. The objective of these consultations is to elucidate the key demands outlined in their recently launched Disability Manifesto to spread awareness regarding the voting rights of approximately 10 million disabled voters for the upcoming general elections and initiate a broader dialogue on integrating individuals with disabilities into mainstream development efforts.

Arman Ali, Executive Director of NCPEDP, stated, "It is imperative to ensure that the facilities and provisions by the Election Commission of India for persons with disabilities in the upcoming elections are adhered to so that they can seamlessly cast their votes." He also expressed satisfaction with the extension



of the postal ballot facility, which, in the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections, will enable 82 lakh elderly voters aged 85 and above, as well as 88.4 lakh disabled voters, to cast their votes from home. Ali emphasized, "Every disabled voter should exercise their right to vote and ensure their voices

are heard." The consultation also addressed the issue of the inaccessibility of polling booths. "Disabled voters must conduct affairs of the polling booths when casting their votes. Recognising these challenges is half the battle won," remarked a representative from Shishu Sarothi.

Sushma Hazarika, ACS, State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Government of Assam, spoke of government initiatives to ensure accessibility in the participation of persons with disabilities in the upcoming elections.

She stressed the need for comprehensive measures to

address the diverse needs of this demographic.

Fanki Chakraborty, Joint Secretary at the Election Commission Office, highlighted the proactive steps taken by the commission and stakeholders to enhance accessibility in this election cycle. He discussed the Saksham app's role in facilitating seamless voting experiences for PwDs and ensuring that polling stations offer necessary facilities.

Moreover, participants voiced additional concerns, such as queue management, the inaccessibility of EVM machines (based on the height of the tabletop), and the crucial role of Booth Level Officers in promptly addressing these issues. Transportation challenges were also raised, underscoring the need for improved accessibility at the polling stations. Additionally, demands

for enhancing voter education and awareness programmes for persons with disabilities were articulated, including language interpretation empower them with the necessary information and resources for active participation in the electoral process.

The consultation primarily focused on pressing issues in the disability sector, emphasising the active involvement of individual disabilities in governance and political decision-making processes and further raising awareness.

NCPEDP has previously conducted state consultations during assembly elections in five poll-bound states in November 2023, namely Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Mizoram, and a press release said.

TESTIMONIALS FROM WELL-WISHERS

"Thank you for the interesting visit, keep up the great work."

KEVIN GOLF
Australian Consulate

"Great work and all the best to the entire team and the lovely children."

"You are doing an excellent job, keep it up!"

**SHREYA BARBARA &
MANISHA DAS**
*Tour Operators
Association of Assam*

"We inspected the Shishu Sarothi Institute and found it to be excellent."

RAJESH GAUTAM
*Regional Director, NE
NIOS Regional Centre,
Guwahati*

"Remarkable work done by Shishu Sarothi. Cheerful, energetic children for me are a hallmark of a place loved by children. Smiling active teachers focused on children convey deep commitment and a sense of purpose. Engaged leadership walking the talk says it all. My best wishes!"

NIKHIL PANT
CSR Consultant

"Very much edified with the activities and work of Shishu Sarothi. I have learned much from my visit and always look forward to Shishu Sarothi."

Thank you."

"Perfect example of early intervention of the child. The way it benefits the children with and without disabilities."

OISHO BANI SOCIETY
Agartala, Tripura

"Most fabulous experience. I wonder why I waited so long to come here. Excellent work."

PRAMADA MENON

"Today's Access Graduation made me cry and laugh and made me so proud. The students are smart, articulate leaders who will make a positive difference in the world."

MELINDA PAVEK
*US Consul General,
Kolkata*

"With an eminent and dedicated leadership and a workforce acting as the strong support system to the organization, has emerged as an enabler in the region. The energy and happiness oozing out of the center speaks for the work. Best of wishes and lots of respect for all those involved. Onwards and upwards!"

**DISHANT
DAIPAYAN DAS**
HCL Tech Education

"Shishu Sarothi, an exceptional institute for differently abled people. The Director and all staff of this institute were experienced."

GAUTAM DAS
*Executive Member -
SWD, Bodo Territorial
Council*

"Most of the participants found the training helpful. Suggestions have been made to have more elaborated training on classroom management strategies catering to children with diverse needs, to introduce more topics on the different types of disabilities, and to introduce more comprehensive training on the pedagogical strategies of teaching children with Special needs. The content for the training was planned and executed effectively."

KOPELE MERO
Headmistress, Bumblebee Inclusive School, Kohima

LEGAL COMPLIANCE



Shishu Sarothi is registered

- Under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (**Regn. No 3469** valid till 11/12/2025).
- Under Sec 50 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act with the Dept. of SJ & E, Govt of Assam [No. **DSJE(G)17/2022/423 of 2022-23**].
- Under Section 12A of the Income **Tax Act (708/12A/CA/87-88 dated 17.10.1988)**.
- PAN number **AALAS0979G** and **TAN SHLS02682B**.
- With Ministry of Corporate Affairs, as an Implementing Agency under Rule 4(1) relating to Sec 135 of the Companies Act 2013 (**CSR00001148**).

GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS

NAME	GENDER	POSITION ON BOARD	MEETINGS ATTENDED
Subhash Ch. Das, IAS (Retd).	Male	Chairperson	4:4
Satyamrit Kagti	Male	Vice Chairperson	3:4
Kavita Patwary	Female	Joint Treasurer	2:4
Urmila Baruah	Female	Joint Treasurer	3:4
Madhu Goenka	Female	Member	4:4
Ramesh Goenka	Male	Member	3:4
Dr. Harsha Bhattacharjee	Male	Member	3:4
Arman Ali	Male	Member	4:4

Staff Salaries

Gross salary in INR	Total	Male	Female
INR 5000 to INR 10000	13	6	7
INR 10001 to INR 15000	26	8	18
INR 15001 to INR 20000	28	14	14
INR 20001 to INR 25000	11	2	9
Above INR 25000	24	9	15
Total	102	39	63

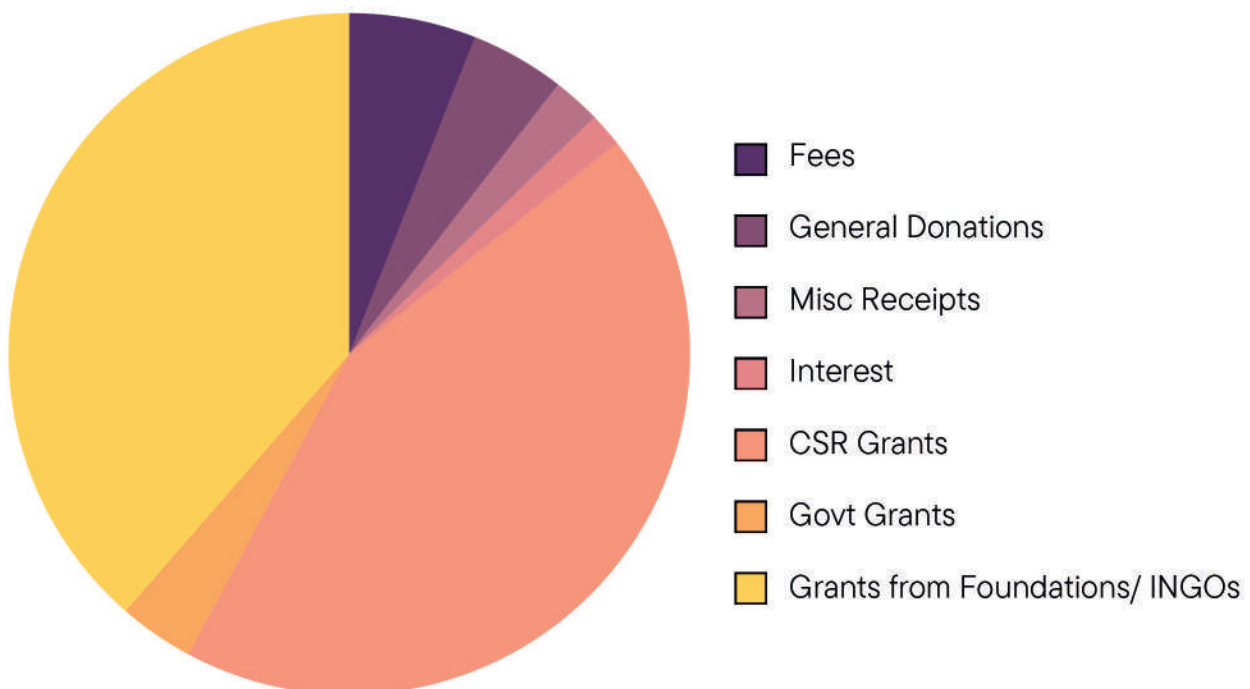
FINANCIALS



SUMMARY

TOTAL INCOME RS. 5,14,01,935
DOMESTIC RS. 4,31,20,729
FOREIGN RS. 82,81,206

Income	2023-24	%	2022-23	%
Fees	3096061	6	1571771	4
General Donations	2300138	4	1865765	4
Misc Receipts	1174080	2	1478971	3
Interest	826441	2	696553	2
CSR Grants	22330771	43	15255971	36
Govt Grants	1834844	4	1264700	3
Grants from Foundations/ INGOs	19839600	39	20606615	48
Total	51401935	100	42740346	100
<i>Excess of Expenditure over Income</i>	<i>1287600</i>		<i>636308</i>	
Total Income	52689535		43376654	



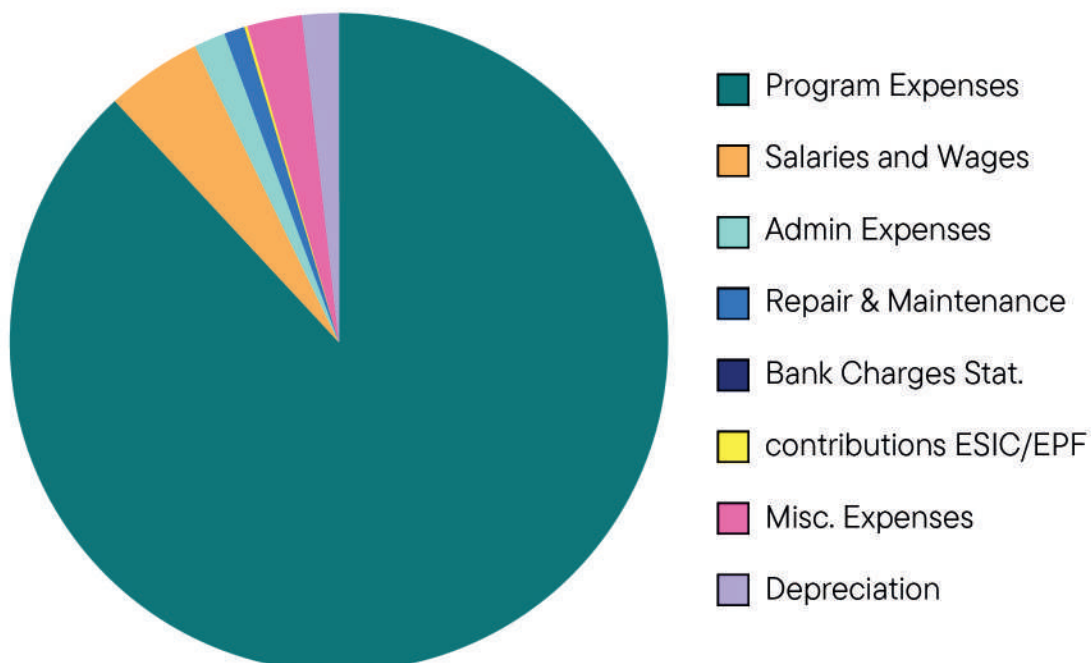
FINANCIALS



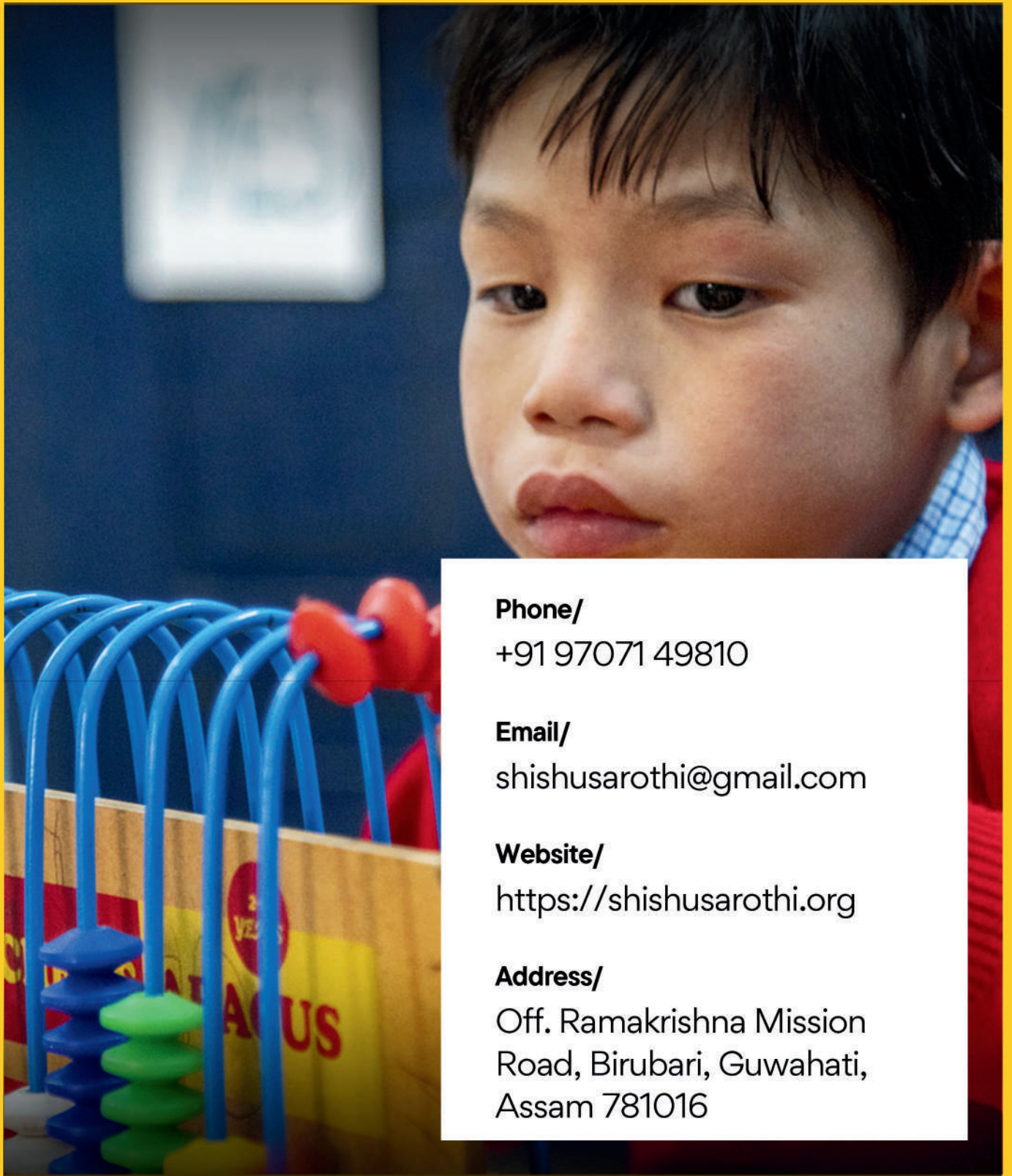
SUMMARY

TOTAL EXPENSES RS. 5,26,89,535
DOMESTIC RS. 4,09,30,499
FOREIGN RS. 1,17,59,036

Expenditure	2023-24	%	2022-23	%
Program Expenses	46411436	88	36821852	85
Salaries and Wages	2486747	5	3423993	8
Admin Expenses	810516	2	1815477	4
Repair & Maintenance	528284	1		
Bank Charges Stat.	7827	0	30923	0
contributions ESIC/EPF	80070	0	54774	0
Misc. Expenses	1416039	3	217740	1
Depreciation	948615	2	1011895	2
Total	52689535	100	43376654	100



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