

### Vanakkam Aikiyam Friends

Summer Break. What an energy gathering time for the school campus and the office! This year I accompanied our 8th grade children to summer camp in Nainital, Uttarakhand State, along with 3 other teachers and 2 volunteers. The visits to Delhi, Agra and Jaipur made our 8th grade children open their eyes wide with amazement and say 'Wow' because of the diversity they experienced. The languages, cultures and things they saw around made them feel that they were in a foreign country.

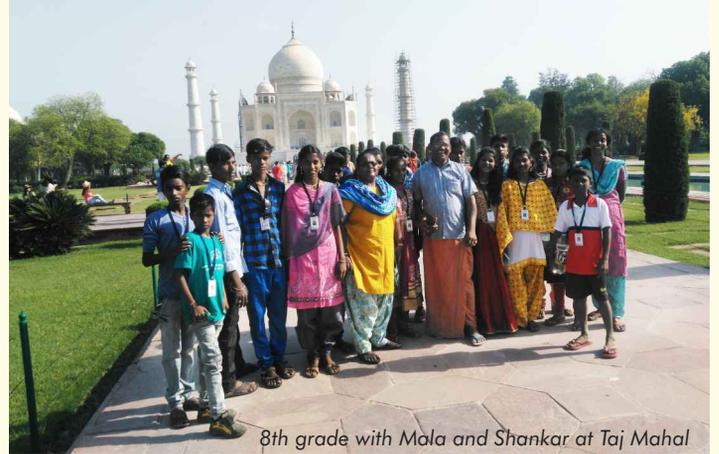
There are 20 new crèche children, which the school and parents chose by lottery from more than 60 applications. The school office is filled with new text books and stationery to be distributed when school opens. Our new 'Harmony' building with its four classrooms has just been inaugurated by the Secretary of the Auroville Foundation, Mr. Chunkath. The working team is busy painting the buildings, repairing furniture, purchasing materials so we can start the new school year with good energy. We, the support group members take several moments to think about all Aikiyam friends and their continuing support which helps us to carry on this work. Please accept our gratitude and we hope you will enjoy the few glimpses into our life, which we share in this newsletter. Aum... Shankar



Bhavani and Nivetha at Nainital



Vijaykumar, Aravindh, Satish, Tamilarasan, Murugan at Nainital



8th grade with Mala and Shankar at Taj Mahal

### Our Eighth Grade

This is the time of year when we bid farewell to our most senior class, almost all of whom joined Aikiyam in 2006 when they were 3 years old. Although we are sad to see them go, we share their excitement about what lies

ahead. Nearly half of them will attend New Era Secondary School, while a third will attend the Kulpalayam Trust School. A few have chosen to attend high school in Pondicherry, and a couple are still undecided.

8th grade girls - Archana, Swetha, Madhumita, Shivashankari, Nivetha, Satyapriya, Arini, Bhavani, Monica, Pachaivazhi at Taj Mahal

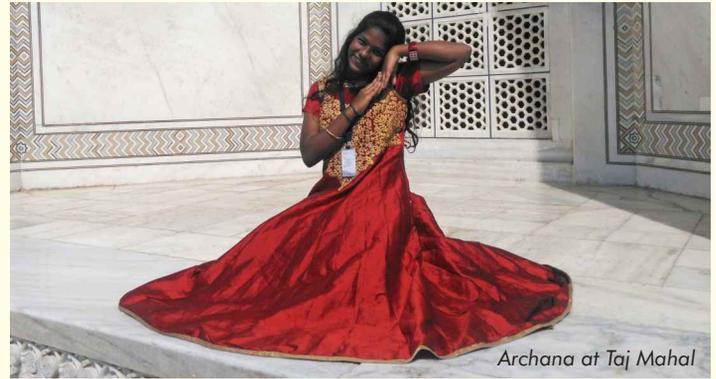


8th grade boys - Sanjai, K. Aravindh, Satish, Vijaykumar, Tamilarasan, Murugan, Madhavan, Joswa, VAravindh, Jagadish at Taj Mahal



## Best Part of My Life! (written in April just before the end of the school year)

My name is Archana and I am studying in 8th grade. Our class teacher is Radhakrishnan and he is our science teacher. I feel very lucky to be in Aikiyam. My school, principal and teachers are God's Gift. My school is the best school. Each class has only 20 students. Our teachers impart to us a good education and good habits. Our first home is our school and second parents are our kind teachers. It provides us good snacks and lunch. Our school is surrounded by plants, trees, creepers and beautiful flowers. Our school has arranged for education trip to Delhi. It's a great chance for us and I will make use of it to learn and explore. We are looking forward for this trip and all my friends are very excited, as this would be our first time to travel by train. There are just another 2 more weeks of school. I will miss my school and everything here. At the age of 3 I came to Aikiyam. Now I am 14 years old. I have spent 11 beautiful years which will stay in my heart forever. I am



Archana at Taj Mahal

### Thank You to Everyone Who Made the Delhi/ Nainital Trip Possible

For a few years we had been taking our 8th graders on a trip to several places of historic interest in the north of India, including trekking near Nainital in the Himalayas, but for the past two years we have been unable to afford this trip. However this year we were blessed with a donation from a former volunteer, who was here in 2010. She set up a fund raising website on the internet and was able to raise

### Trip to North India by 8th grade students Aravindh, Swetha, Arini, Nivetha, Monica and Joswa

#### Train Travelling

We travelled by train to New Delhi. It is very comfortable for all and there is enough space. We like train travelling because we are travelling a long time with friends. And we also learn to keep our things carefully and we learn how to behave in the train with other people.

We saw some people are good and some other people are not so good with others. In the train it is very hot to travel. We were also watching outside; it is interesting to see outside of the station where the train was stopped. When we reached the station we always want to be careful with our things and we also want to be careful with the place where we are sitting. When we enter into a tunnel it is so dark and that time we think this is the place where some animal lives.

#### New Delhi

We stayed two nights in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and then we went many places for sightseeing, and we all enjoyed seeing many things and places. We visited the Red

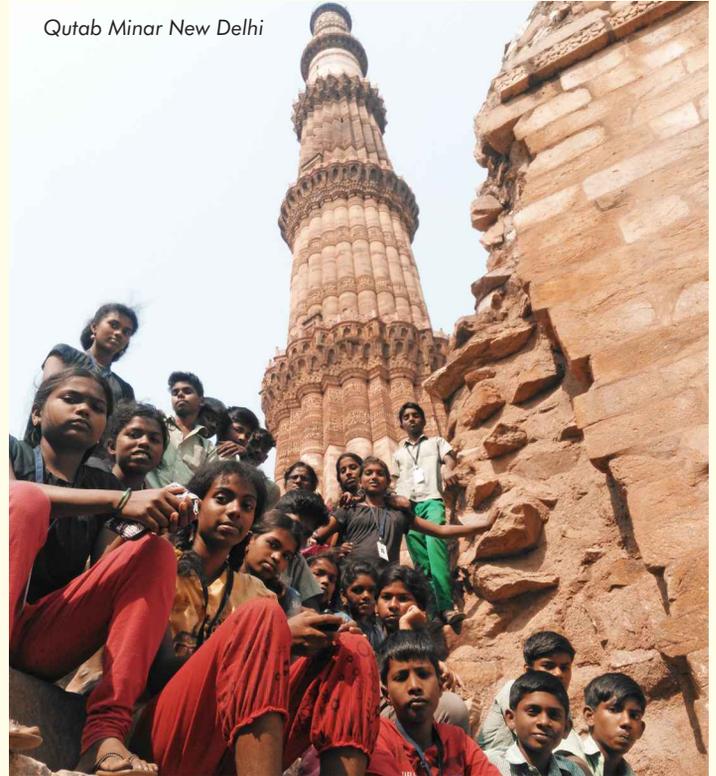


Parliament House New Delhi

sure this will be the best part of my life. Next year I am going to join in a school which is in Pondy. Everything will be different. I will miss my teachers, options and everything here. I would like to thank all my teachers who have taught me since crèche. "Thank you teachers."

enough to make the trip possible. We are all so grateful for this, especially the students, most of whom have never been on a train journey before and have never been out of Tamil Nadu. For some of them it may be the only time in their lives that they will have such a travel opportunity. Here is what a few of them have written:

Qutab Minar New Delhi



Fort, Rashtrapati Bhavan, Parliament House, India Gate, Lotus Temple, Iskcon Temple, Qutab Minar, the Science Exhibition and Museum. We had a little difficulty with the Hindi language but the trip to New Delhi gave us much knowledge and it is valuable for us.

One student said "I like the Lotus Temple very much . I like the shape and I also like the silence, meditation, and also the information they give to the visitors, we enjoyed a lot". Another said "I didn't like Delhi. It was very polluted, but I love the Ashram."

### Nainital Camp

We stayed in Nainital for 8 days to attend the youth camp for one week. When we went to Nainital we all were wearing our sweaters and we all are very happy. Nainital makes us fresh and cool which was opposite to Rajasthan and other places. We did scrambling, bouldering, rock climbing, flying fox, river crossing, mountain crossing and some other activities. In rock climbing, we know if we fall, it would not feel nice, but we did well in all the activities. The activities are new for us, but it is easy because we followed the instruction given by the coach. In our village they didn't do this kind of activity.

And we also did trekking in the evening. We spent one whole day trekking 16 km. At first we were all scared of 16 km trekking, but we walked without getting tired. We started in the morning and we all enjoyed it very much. It was the best part of the trip.



Nivetha River Crossing



Murugan Flying Fox

We were very happy in Nainital camp. It was very good and it is a new experience for all of us and they gave good



Mala near India Gate with Shankar and Usha

seeing at the Baha'i Lotus Temple, India Gate, the Parliament Buildings and Jama Masjid etc. Then we started our journey to Nainital. In Nainital the children attended a youth camp, where they enjoyed physical activities like trekking and rock climbing. In Nainital I attended a study camp. Because some of the programmes, such as a lecture

### **Mala, one of the teachers who accompanied the students writes:**

Our team of 6 adults and 20 children started the trip on April 19, 2017. We arrived in Delhi by train from Pondicherry. We stayed at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Delhi. We spent one day in Delhi for site

food to us. And we had a town visit and sight-seeing.

### Agra

We visit the Taj Mahal made with white marble and with many colourful gems and we took some group photos. There were four buildings surrounding the Taj Mahal and they were red in colour. There were two samadhis of Mumtaz and Shah Jahan.

The Red Fort was made with mirrors and glass and many gems. When we are all in the Red Fort we like to see the view of the Taj Mahal from the Red Fort and we also see the river.

### Mathura

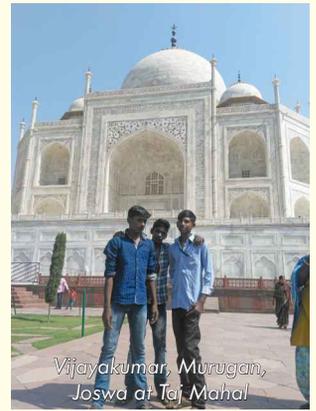
We went to Mathura and while there went to the place where Krishna was born and where he played. We all see many kinds of Krishna temples. In Krishna temple what we like the most is paintings and structures. And also we all saw the river where Radha and her friends were bathing. Krishna took her cloth and was sitting up in the tree and laughing. The tree was there, but the tree was very empty and dry.

### Jaipur and Rajasthan

In Rajasthan we are very hot in the sun. We visit many places by walking and we did shopping and we see one Krishna Temple and one Hanuman Temple.

### Thank you

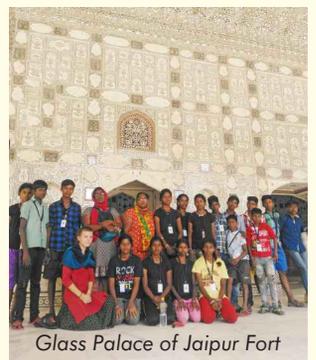
I really enjoyed my holidays with my friends in New Delhi. I am lucky because I get a nice opportunity. I love this tour because it was very useful to me. I enjoyed all the places. This trip gave me valuable things and a lot of knowledge. I want to say thanks to all the people who made this trip possible and to the teachers for taking us.



Vijayakumar, Murugan, Joswa at Taj Mahal



Premji Mandir Mathura



Glass Palace of Jaipur Fort

on the Mother, were in Marathi, which I do not understand, I couldn't attend it fully but I was able to take part in other activities like yoga, meditation, site seeing and singing. We enjoyed seven days there. We also loved the food, which was served with so much love

On the return journey, we spent two days visiting in and around Agra. We enjoyed seeing the Taj Mahal, one of the seven wonders of the world and the Red Fort. We also visited Brindhavan, the birth place of Krishna, and the Krishna Temple nearby. Then we went to Rajasthan, and spent two days visiting the important places in Rajasthan. We were overwhelmed by seeing the stunning Pink City and its architecture. There also we visited many temples. We also enjoyed seeing palaces, museums and forts.

This trip helped us and our children to learn about the famous places and the history behind them. They were happy to actually see and experience the places that they had read about in their text books. Moreover the stay at

Delhi Ashram was peaceful, and pleasant, and we felt as if we were staying at our own home. As a whole the trip was most valuable, educative and enjoyable.

### Harmony Building - Four More New Classrooms

We have just completed the second of two classroom buildings, and we are so very happy that during the next school year we will not have to listen to the banging, and drilling that have been part of our life since we began the first building In January of 2015. We are delighted to have four beautiful new classrooms in addition to the ones inaugurated last September and we are grateful to the



Inauguration of Harmony Building



Mr. Chunkath receives a gift from Aikiyam following the inauguration



New Classroom

Government of India for providing the necessary funding. We were honoured to have Mr. Chunkath, Secretary of the Auroville Foundation inaugurate the Harmony Building on June 7th.

### My School and My Yoga Class by Harini, 7th grade



Harini

My favourite place is my school. We have many options here. Apart from this we also have yoga class. Meltem, our yoga teacher, comes to our class once in a week. I like doing yoga very much. I feel very relaxed and my mind is very fresh. We can

develop our concentration power by doing yoga. It also reduces the stress. We can keep ourselves fit by doing yoga regularly. I like my yoga teacher because she teaches yoga very well. My favourite postures in yoga are "archer" and "tree" postures. These postures help us to concentrate well. We learn new postures every time we go to yoga class. Doing yoga is fun. Just like me, my friends also enjoy doing yoga. We are so lucky to be here in Aikiyam.

### My School Library by Jeevanaas 7th grade

We have a big library in our school. It is a wonderful place in our school. In our library we have many different kinds of books, such as stories, science and science fiction books. Every day after lunch we go to the library and we take two books, one in English and one in Tamil. We can keep the book with us for a week to read. We return them the following week when we go to the library. Our librarian displays some interesting information on the notice board. We find that information very useful. We love our library because we get a chance to read books in English and Tamil. We can improve our English by reading books. It is useful because by reading books we get to know lots of

information. It also helps us to do our project work. We share this information in our assembly. We get confident because we have teachers to help us to read.



Jeevanaas

You can send your donation via the Auroville International Centre in your country, or send a cheque made payable to 'Auroville Unity Fund', Town Hall, Auroville, 605101 Tamil Nadu, INDIA indicating clearly that the donation is for Aikiyam School, or you can send it electronically by going to <http://www.auroville.com/donations/> and following the instructions.

**Aikiyam School, New Creation, Auroville 605101, Tamil Nadu, INDIA. e-mail: [assg@auroville.org.in](mailto:assg@auroville.org.in);**  
**ph: +91 (413)-2622358 or +91 (0)8940193339;**  
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