From the President’s Desk:

When the final draft of this e-newsletter was put across me so that I could pen my thoughts for the issue, I was amazed to see the number of events, celebrations, workshops and special visitors to Tamana this issue had covered. I was told that so much has happened over the year that it had to be distributed across two issues of the newsletter. There is not a single day at Tamana which is uneventful. Besides these major events which have been covered, every single day is a celebration of triumph of the human spirit.

We try to give all kinds of experiences to our students – excursions, celebrating festivals, opportunities for inclusion through our fashion show and carnival. Confidence building is done through participating in cultural performance by students at different functions all over Delhi. We never miss an opportunity where our students are invited to perform in front of diverse audiences. We see it as awareness building and sensitization.

Even the visit of an eminent dignitary at Tamana is treated as a special assembly with a complete cultural programme planned for the dignitary. The annual day at Nai Disha saw 100% participation of the students. Some visitors to Tamana come only to give - like Nikhil the volunteer from US and the student group brought by Promise. We are immensely grateful to all volunteers at Tamana, who with their compassion and dedication try to share in our responsibilities. New initiatives have also to be taken. We started reverse integration to mainstream our autistic with the typically developing students. The Tamana Georgia project was another step towards self-reliance in partnership with Coca-Cola India. As the population of young adults at Tamana is increasing, we are adding more rooms at School of Hope and Tamana Special Schools to start vocational programmes. We at Tamana believe in evolving with the changing scenario and needs.

We hope when you browse through the newsletter you will agree with me that there is never a dull day at Tamana!
International Delegates

- **21st May 2011**: Ms Brigitta Witts, Worldwide Head CSR, Hyatt Regency and CSR team of Hyatt Regency Delhi visited Nai Disha. After her visit, Tamana was selected as a partner by Hyatt Regency Delhi for its CSR activities.

- **27th June 2011**: Mr. Mahmood Ahmed Vice president, Rising Sun Education and Welfare Society, Lahore, Pakistan visited Nai Disha. He met the Director and principals of three schools. Information was exchanged on Programmes of the two organisations and similarities were found in the kinds of services provided, programmes and problems faced.

- **22nd July 2011**: The senior executive leadership of Association of Independent Schools (AIS), the peak body representing THE BEST PRIVATE SCHOOL BRANDS in Australia visited Nai Disha. The AIS leadership comprising Dr. Geoff Newcombe (Executive Director) and Mr. Darryl Buchanan (Director, Professional Development) were in India to meet select school leadership.

- **3rd November 2011**: Ms Judy Tenzer, Vice President American Express Philanthropy, New York, visited Tamana Nai Disha. American Express philanthropy provided financial support for the Tamana Kindergarten Project for the year 2010-2011. Ms Judy was welcomed by the students of Tamana and Tamana Kindergarten. Ms Tenzer was delighted to interact with the tiny tots and amazed to see their skills and talents.

- **28th November 2011**: Delegation of Board of Directors of Indian Schools in the Sultanate of Oman, an apex body governing 19 Indian schools providing education to over 33,000 Indian Children in the Sultanate- visited Tamana Special School and Nai Disha. They were planning to open a special school in Oman. They had come to know that Tamana was the best special education facility in India and had come to visit the three schools and take consultations.

International Volunteers

Nikhil Bali, a High School student from USA, wanted to utilize his vacations by working at an NGO in India. He had worked with the Special needs children in USA. Nikhil approached Tamana through Special Olympics New Delhi Office.

Nikhil was full of positive energy and had very strong feelings and belief about the limited capabilities of the special needs children. Although he had the language barrier but he decided to train our students for cricket, badminton, basket ball and athletics. He picked up Hindi very fast, as he felt that it would be of great asset while teaching and training our students here. He would never miss any day from the school and would be working constantly with the children - praising and motivating children that they could do better. He would identify their very minor needs and will come up with solutions in a play way methods.

Within weeks he became a buddy with all the students of Nai Disha. Students would ask about him if they did not see him. The hard work which Nikhil did with our students paid off well. Our students secured top three positions at a badminton tournament, organized by the Air Force Golden Jubilee School.

Students and the staff members still miss him as a person and a trainer who could do so much with students and won their hearts.
Annual Day of Nai Disha

An Annual Day was held at Nai Disha on the 17th of September 2011 in which 101 students participated in programmes like group dance, solo dance, group songs and fashion show. The entire group of students of Nai Disha showed their enthusiasm and confidence in showcasing their talent in front of their parents and chief guest. Dr. Shyama Chona, President, Tamana, muted the idea of annual day celebrations in the three branches of Tamana. She believes that these children though differently abled, are talented in their own ways and should be given a platform to showcase their talent. According to her these children are no less than the rest and therefore have the undying spirit to come out of all hardships and adversaries of life when they are provided with the right kind of training, love and support.

The Annual Day was graced by Dr. S.S. Jena, Chairman of NIOS in the morning session. Dr. Jena announced that the NIOS has taken a decision to upgrade the Tamana Study Centre to the 10th Grade and he also expressed his desire that Tamana could help NIOS to devise the curriculum for the mentally challenged individuals. Mr. G.S. Patnaik, Vice Chairman DDA and Mr. Ashvinder Singh, MD Unistyle Images attended the afternoon session. Each of them in their own way was speechless after seeing the students performing. Mr. Patnaik felt the need of more such institutions in India and said Tamana can be a role model to be followed by others in this field. They all expressed their appreciation towards the cause and said that they would love to help in all possible ways.

Workshops at Tamana:

- **Dr Alka Aneja, a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist** who has trained and worked as faculty at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, USA, presented a cross cultural perspective on "Autism: Diagnoses, Treatment and Intervention Strategies" on 6th July 2011 at School of Hope. Her speciality and area of research is in autism spectrum disorders. She has extensively worked with ASD population during their assessment, management along with an inter-disciplinary ASD team.

- **Ms. Rashi Bijlani, a student from Goldsmiths, University of London**, pursuing her M.A in Dance and Movement Psychotherapy, worked as volunteer for 6 weeks at Tamana in August 2011. Her dissertation topic was Dance and Movement Therapy with Autistic students. She identified 15 students from 8-15 years of age as subjects for her dissertation. She conducted individual and group sessions. A workshop was planned for the teachers by Rashi so that they could be involved with her in the therapy. It was hands on practical workshop. During the workshop Rashi demonstrated activities which she used during her sessions with Autistic children. Most of the activities which she used were effective for those students who do not like to participate in any activity involving a physical movement. Most of them were fun activities. Overall it was an interesting and useful workshop.

Happenings:

Tamana students were invited to perform at:

- **Northern Railway Women’s Welfare Organization** (Delhi Division) celebrated their Annual Cultural Programme on 10th December 2011 at National Rail Museum, Chankya Puri, New Delhi. The programme focused on children with disability and children in distress.

- **National Institute of Open Schooling** invited Tamana students to put up a 20 minutes cultural performance on their 23rd Foundation day on 23rd November 2011, at the NIOS headquarters at Noida. The presentation was appreciated by everyone present at the function and gave a new insight to understanding the needs of the special individuals.
A Step Towards Self-Reliance

The nine students of Nai Disha and one student of Tamana Special School who were appointed as interns April 2011 at Tamana completed their internship in the month of August and received their first stipend at the annual function held at Nai Disha in September 2011. The proud recipients were -

- Arti Laul and Sonu Jain - Bakery Assistants
- Anjali Punetha - Assistant to Canteen In-charge
- Tanya Soni and Saumya Gupta - Assistants to teacher at Tamana Special School
- Kaustubh Sachdeva - Assistant File making Unit
- Tej Kiran and Ruhi Ansari - Assistants in Stitching Unit
- Sharad Dang and Arsh Khanna - Sales person - Bakery
- Deepak Taneja - Assistant in Front Office Nai Disha

The happiness of the students intern cannot be described on receiving their first salary. All students and teachers at Nai Disha were distributed sweets by the new salaried interns. They now eagerly wait for the first of the month when they receive their stipend envelope. Plans are made in advance about spending their earnings. They even make applications for advance salary payment.

Tamana Georgia Project:

Soft beverage Giant Coca Cola India joined hands with Tamana to start a project for Economic rehabilitation of the Differently Abled young adults. Tamana and Coca-Cola India together developed a sustainable basic employment opportunity for mentally challenged adults, wherein they are able to independently carry out an assignment for a salary of ~Rs. 5000 p.m. Coca-Cola India has an aggressive business plan to place their Hot Coffee and Tea vending machines at numerous offices across the country. The proposal was to train and place special needs adults from Tamana as Machine Operators at the offices where Georgia vending machines are installed. The project started in May 2011. The trained special educators were given the responsibility to train Tamana nominated students. Thereafter they will be trained to operate the machines in the Coca-Cola India office - as a live office environment for a period of two months.

Three students of Nai Disha-Pankaj Khokar, Ashish Bhatt and Salil Shrivastav - are in the final stages of training and will get their first paid placement at Tamana.

Festival Time in Tamana

All Festivals are celebrated with zeal and enthusiasm at Tamana. The students are prepared in advanced for the festival by discussing the festival in morning assembly. One notice board in each school is dedicated to festivals of the month. The bulletin boards also display paintings and information on the festival. The festival is celebrated with all the rituals - hoisting of flag and cultural programme at Independence day; having a fun day with teachers on Teacher's Day; rangoli and diya decorations at Diwali accompanied with bursting of crackers, and a special mass at Christmas in the neighborhood church.
Tamana’s Annual Fashion Show 2011

Tamana celebrated inclusion of fashion in the world of differently abled with a fashion show by the students of ‘Tamana schools’ on 16th October 2011. The show previewed collections by Payal Jain, Rajesh Pratap Singh, Shantanu And Nikhil, Ashish Soni, Abraham and Thakore and fabinida.

The fashion show was held at The Hyatt Regency Delhi in the gracious presence of Mr. Salman Khurshid, Honorable Union Cabinet Minister for Law and Justice & Minority Affairs, Dr. Kiran Walia, Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, and Mr Sunil Sethi, President, FDCI.

The evening opened with lighting of the lamp and Zee TV’s Little Champ Diwakar singing the prayer song “Ali Maula” accompanied by specially enabled students of Tamana Special Schools who performed dance movements. It was followed by two heart-warming performances, first by the students of Tamana especially choreographed by Shiamak Davar Institute for Performing Arts and the second one by the Students of Tamana Preschools for EWS. The show witnessed a one-of-a-kind celebrity walk by specially enabled students of Tamana with the principals of leading schools of Delhi/NCR, namely, Mrs. Anita Malhotra (Founding Principal, Lotus Valley School), Ms. Abha Sehgal (Principal, Sanskriti School), Ms. Aditi Mishra (Principal, DPS Gurgaon), Mr. M.I. Hussain (Principal, DPS, Mathura Road), Ms.Shipra Sircar (Principal, Air Force Golden Jubilee Institute), Ms. Meenakshi Sahni (Principal, Modern School, Vasant Vihar), Ms. Manika Sharma (Principal, Shri Ram School, Junior Campus) and Mrs. Anuradha Rai (Founding Principal, PP International School). This was then followed by two inclusion walks by the specially enabled students of Tamana walking hand in hand with the students of Tamana Preschools for EWS and later with the students of PP International School. These three sequences on the ramp symbolised inclusion in education.

In 2011, Tamana gave recognition to six individuals and two organisations which have continuously supported its cause with dedication and compassion. Mr. Salman Khurshid, Honorable Union Cabinet Minister for Law and Justice & Minority Affairs, presented the Lifetime Philanthropy Award to Mr Atul Singh, President Coca Cola India and South west Asia; Humanitarian awards to Hyatt Regency Delhi, Ms. Payal Jain (Fashion Designer), Mr. Pramod Gupta (Advocate), Mr. Suresh Gupta (C.A.), The Communication Council, (PR Company), Mr. Varinder Wadhwa (Modern Stage Service), Mr. Vijay Gupta (Architect). The show ended with the ramp sequences of the participating designers. The highlight of these sequences was the student of Tamana walking with the designer in an ensemble designed by the artist.

Excursions

Excursions are an integral part of Tamana curriculum.

At times they have an education intent like visit to the Science Museum (11th November 2011) and Air Force Museum (30th November 2011). At times it's just for fun like a picnic at Qutub Minar (21st August 2011).
New Initiatives - Reverse Integration at School of Hope

Right to education came as boon to the students & parents of special children who are ready for school. Parent of autistic students started dreaming about their children going to mainstream school like any other parent. Theoretically it sounded extremely good but practically it is extremely difficult to integrate moderate to severe category of autistic children because of the required physical infrastructure and trained professional. The mainstream schools are lacking in these and are not ready to integrate the special needs individuals in their setup.

Dr. Shayama Chona, Founder and President of Tamana came with the idea of reverse integration. Around 200 preschool age children from economically weaker sections of society were admitted in pre nursery, nursery, prep, class 1, 2 and 3 at Tamana. These children attended classes in two group - one group in the afternoon after 2 pm and one group in the morning between 9.30 am to 12.30 pm. The morning shift students were integrated with the special needs students at School of Hope.

This program has been able to achieve inclusion for its two kinds of beneficiaries. Firstly, the program is immensely benefitting the underprivileged children who have received the opportunity to be included in the education system. It is helping overcome the limitations imposed by poverty and multiple deprivations during critical early years of life which prevent these children from realizing their full potential as a result there is a marked improvement in quality of life of these children.

The special needs students of Tamana Autism Centre are getting opportunities for one to one social interactions, for practicing social communication skills, for imitating appropriate behaviors of role models. They share same class room. The children of the two groups put up joint performances at Tamana events and celebrations. All high functioning autistic students at the Autism Centre now have a buddy from the kindergarten who shares food with him, plays with him, helps him with his class work, hold his hand and takes him around the school. It is pleasure to see them holding hands and walking together for better tomorrow. The integration has also increased acceptance of the special needs children in the community.

Ms. Usha Varma
Grand Finale to a fabulous 2011 - Tamana Winter Carnival

The British High Commissioner, Mr. James Bevan and his wife hosted the Tamana Winter Carnival 2011 at 2, Rajaji Marg, New Delhi on Wednesday 14th December 2011. This is the sixth consecutive year that the carnival is being held at the official residence of the British High Commissioner. The British High Commission has time and again provided support for different projects of Tamana.

The carnival was inaugurated by the High Commissioner's wife, Mrs Janet Purdie, Mrs. Anuradha Kumar (Chairperson Tamana) and Dr. Shayama Chona (President, Tamana). The students of Tamana, students of Tamana Kindergarten and Tamana Chona (founder's daughter) put up scintillating dance performances at the inaugural ceremony.

This year’s Carnival has participation of 150 vendors and NGOs exhibiting and selling high end products. There was a special children's corner managed by Tamana staff. There was a live performance by Diwakar Sharma. The carnival pulls thousands of Delhiites every year. Through out the day the venue was choc-a-block full and the exhibitors had a blast with roaring sales of their products. The food court was a sell out by 3 pm with many visitors going back hungry!!

The highlight of this year’s carnival was that the 15 employees of Hyatt Regency Delhi worked as volunteers at the carnival. They took on responsibilities shoulder to shoulder with the Tamana staff. The Hyatt employees really enjoyed themselves and the Tamana employees were relieved to have their duties shared in the day long event.

Glimpses of Winter Carnival 2011...
Tamana is an non-governmental organization for Disability providing services for autism and multiple disabilities. In Special Consultative Status with United Nation’s Economic and Social Council.

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Tamana Special School
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New Delhi
Phone: 26151572

Nai Disha Vocational Training Centre
C-10/8
Vasant Vihar
New Delhi
Phone: 26151587/26148269

Tamana Elementary School - Reverse Integration Project
For children from economically deprived families. From class Pre-nursery to Class 5.
Morning session at School of Hope and Tamana Special School
Afternoon session at School of Hope

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Credits:
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