



February 2016

# Assam Foundation of North America

**NEWSLETTER**

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## Sustainable support & services for differently abled children

Millions of children are orphaned across the globe and most of the time they are abandoned by their families. In India parents are increasingly abandoning children born with disabilities citing a lack of funds to support such children or sometime not committed for a life long adjustment. Srithi is one of such victim found in Kamakhya Temple premise and finally embrace by Students Welfare Mission. There would be 20 similar heart-breaking stories connected to each residential child who got a permanent address named Tapoban.



Children at Tapoban

TAPOBAN is providing services in the field of disability, abandoned child, orphan child and underprivileged child. Starting from 3 children in 2005 Tapoban has established a lifeline to 25 residential children; otherwise majority of them would have been exposed to a life of cruelty, misery and hopelessness without the basic necessities. At Tapoban children are getting training like Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy and Braille Education to help them overcome some of their challenges and become more independent. Tapoban is also providing both vocal and instrumental training. One of the biggest achievements that Tapoban is proud of producing two vocalists Sumi and Purnima, who are visually impaired, but both are gifted singers. Tapoban is emphasizing on different sports and hand activities with a vision to accelerate the physical and mental growth in addition to the development of mutual cooperation, understanding, tolerance and fraternity among these special children. Today 102 children are attending various training and therapy sessions at Tapoban. But to accommodate these many children with special needs is becoming a challenge for an institution, which is driven by a single man's hard earned money and small donations and community assistances. Majority of children need long term treatment and support which leads to a substantial cost in the form of infrastructure, resource and equipment. In the coming years sustainability of the program will be the biggest challenge. They need support to raise fund to address operational and functional necessities for residential and daycare students. AFNA is hoping for your support to help Tapoban continue this important work and sustain the home for so many differently abled children. Please read more about Tapoban at AFNA website and AFNA's involvement with their projects.



### **Get Involved:**

**Monthly volunteer call:**  
First Sunday, every month,  
10am - 11am PT  
Dial in: 641-7153272  
Access Code - 457920#

*We need active volunteers to run our projects. Please reach out to us (contacts above) or join our monthly volunteer meetings to know more.*

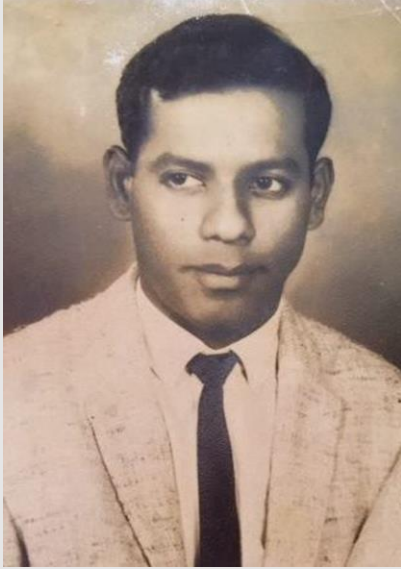
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### **Donate:**

**By check (Pay to: AFNA)**  
Mailing address:  
SARFARAZ TAHER,  
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4391 MCMENEMY ST  
VADNAIS HEIGHTS, MN 55127

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## Remembering Mahesh Baisyha-1934-2015



Mahesh Baisyha passed away on Wednesday, December 30, 2015 in Pleasanton, California. He was eighty-one years old. Mr Baisyha is survived by his children Luna Bora and Ankur Baisyha, their spouses, four grandchildren.

Mahesh Baisyha was born in Tezpur, Assam as one of seven siblings. He completed his early schooling in Tezpur and completed his M.S. in Architecture from Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Gujarat, India. Mahesh married Lakhimi Baisyha (Lulu) in 1966 and settled in Guwahati where he worked as a town planner and architect. Their two children were born in Guwahati. The family moved to Kano, Nigeria in 1977 where Mr Baisyha worked as the chief Town Planner in the Urban Development Board. The Baisyha family immigrated to the United States in 1984 and Mr Baisyha worked in the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the family settled on Edison, New Jersey. Mr Baisyha retired in 1999 and the family moved to Dublin, California, closer to his children who had also settled in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Mr Baisyha and his family were very socially active in the Assamese community in North America. He was especially dedicated to teaching the second-generation youth and opened an Assamese school to instruct children in Assamese language and culture. Along with his brothers in Assam, Mr Baisyha also planned and built one of the first schools in his native home of Moria in Nalbari District of Assam. After his retirement, Mr Baisyha developed a new passion in watercolor painting and expressed his creative spirit. He excelled at capturing colorful landscapes and shared his artwork with family and in exhibitions.

Mr Baisyha was a strong figure in the family and in the community. He was dedicated to his work and his community and enjoyed meeting and making friends of all ages. His creativity and steadfast love for his family and community will be missed.



An award winning painting by Mahesh Baisyha

## Scholarships for Special Education at Shishu Sarothi

AFNA is happy to provide a grant of \$1000 to Shishu Sarothi for its Centre for Special Education and Early Intervention Unit. This money will go towards procuring 8 special chairs for the kids with Cerebral Palsy. The center already has 22 such chairs and need around another 8 to accommodate all the children getting special education there. The chair as shown below provides a safe mechanism for the kids to carry out their daily activities in the center. Each chair is either built locally from trained carpenters or bought from Mobility India and costs between INR 8000 to INR12000. We are happy to kick off our first funding for 2016 with Shishu Sarothi. We are actively working with them to identify other needs and figure our solutions for them. Our special thanks to our donors who enabled us to fund this project and AFNA looks forward to your continued support.



### Volunteer Email DL:

Subscribes to  
[afna-vols@freelists.org](mailto:afna-vols@freelists.org)  
at  
[freelists.org/list/afna-vols](http://freelists.org/list/afna-vols)



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