



## SHUKHAR FOUNDATION

OUR JOURNEY

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After spending the night in Junagadh, we left for Chitradav on 19th January.

As we drove off, we watched mount Girnar from afar. This [sacred Girnar mountain](#), also known as Revatak Parvata, rises dramatically from the plains and is covered with Jain and Hindu temples. Pilgrims from far and wide come to tackle the long climb up 10,000 stone steps to the summit, which is best begun at dawn. Our Grandparents can tell many more stories about this sacred and holy place.

The drive from Junagadh to Chitradav was quite challenging as it was a bumpy ride all the way. We passed through mango orchards. Many of the best mangoes come from here. Many Ismaili farmers live here, most of whom are pretty poor and can barely meet their expenses. This part of Gujarat is called Sasan Gir, aka Gir Somnath, which is also quite well-known for its [Lion's sanctuary](#).

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After traveling for almost two hours, we finally arrived at the Chitradav school. The Aga Khan School, Chitradav, Gir Somnath, Gujarat School is a proud recipient of [The Award For Excellence](#) in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Practices. This [Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar](#) (award) is very prestigious, and the principal is happy to share and show it to us as it is a great accomplishment for this school.

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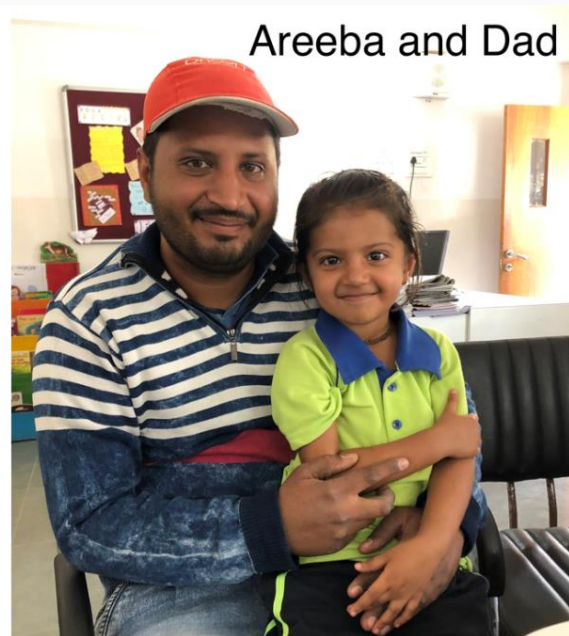


The Chitravad school principal is happy to share the award.

Some of you may not know this, but Prince Ali Mohamed visited this school in March 2020, a surprise and sudden visit. We are sure that AKESI and the local council must have known about this visit, but it was kept a secret for the rest of the Jamaat living in the area. We also learned that Prince Ali Mohamed was quite impressed with this school and their artwork and gave guidance to the principal and teachers. He was gifted with artwork made by a student with the help of a teacher, which the prince happily accepted.



We wanted you to know that many of these children of the farmers found it very difficult to come to school as they live 10-15 miles from Chitradav. However, a family from Calgary, Alberta, was kind enough and donated a few buses, which helped bring kids to the school fresh and ready to learn. So now the attendance has increased. We met with a few of our sponsored children and interviewed new ones too.



**Story of Hiren:**

About four years back, Hiren's father, a driver at the hotel we were staying at, saw us interviewing various kids and enquired about what we were doing. After learning that we were funding their education, he pleaded with us to take his son into this program, which we did because we knew that with his modest wages as a driver, he would never be able to afford his son's education. So we took him under the Gujarat Journey education program and started him in kindergarten. We are happy to report that he is in grade four now with a bright future ahead.

This year Hiren's dad brought his second child Areeba, to us to see if we would accept her and provide funding. **So we are looking for sponsors for this kid and a few more.** As you can see, the Shukhar Foundation's hard work with the support of generous donors is a tremendous success - especially when it comes to the sponsored education program where a marginalized family hopes for a bright future for their kids.

In our next newsletter, we will share our visit to The Maliya Hatina Hostel, Girnar School and The Astha Mental Institution.