



BAITHAK



Making Lasting *Impressions*

Baithak Foundation Annual Report
2024-25

Index

Message from the Founders	01
The APT Project	02
The APT Project: A Closer Look	03
The APT Project: Leveraging Data	04
APT Pilots	05
Taleem Clubs : Beginning of a Life-long Journey	06
Bhimsen	07
Pune Kabir Festival	08
Curated Concerts	09
Pilots@Baithak	10
Team Updates	11
Press & Outreach	12
Financials & Outlook for 2025-26	13
Join the Community	14



Message from the Founders

Why do we do what we do?

Why do we find spreading music more satisfying than our previous jobs?

The two of us ask this question again and again. While we do not have a conclusive answer, one thing we can say for sure is, **it's all about the impressions.**

The impressions created by profound musical experiences that we have been fortunate to have, or the impressions that our mentors and their acts of generosity created in our young minds.

Though we measure our work at Baithak in terms of children reached, concerts delivered, artists supported, etc., ultimately, what matters are the impressions we create.

Academic year (AY) 2023-24 was for better clarity and building the org muscle to handle the scale.

We utilised AY 2024-25 to become more aware of the impressions we create and make them more impactful and lasting.

Through our work with over 70 schools, we were able to create impressions of beauty, aesthetics, rigour, and sensitivity for our children.

More than 150 young artists participated in these programs and got a taste of taking music beyond barriers of money and social status.

As our team grows, the two of us are very mindful of the impressions that we and working with Baithak will leave on the minds of our young team.

As Kabir says, we are all here on the potter's wheel, being shaped by the strokes we receive from multiple directions.

The impressions we receive ultimately shape us. Why not make those impressions beautiful and long-lasting?

Here are some new things and old things we tried doing in a new way, in quest of creating better impressions:

- We started the Kshitij Puraskar to acknowledge the commitment of young artists who have been partnering with Baithak for over five years and have contributed uniquely to this work.
- We launched new pilots like SoundBox and Taal Tara Vara, and now they are becoming a part of the core offering.
- We have upgraded our sound equipment for better portability.
- We spent more time talking to and even more time listening to the teachers. These conversations have helped us tweak our program for better impact.
- We conducted regular sessions and discussions to up-skill our team and broaden their as well as our perspective.
- We have a better understanding of our team members, their ambitions and aspirations and how all of it aligns with their role at Baithak.

While this is just a bird's eye view, the following pages of this report zoom into individual projects and activities and what's new.

We are grateful to all who enable this work of taking music to more children. While a lot has been done, the need is way bigger than we can imagine.

We urge you all to join this mission of transformative change-making and strengthen this community that believes in the power of music.

Dakshayani & Mandar



The APT Project

This year marked a significant leap for Baithak's flagship initiative – the APT Project (Anubhav–Parichay–Taleem), a holistic approach to introducing Indian traditional performing arts in schools and community spaces. Responding to the growing interest from educators, parents, and patrons, we expanded the reach of APT to 70 unique spaces across Pune and beyond during the academic year 2024–25.

The project continues to nurture curiosity, cultural rootedness, and emotional intelligence in children through experience-based sessions (Anubhav), structured introductions (Parichay), and consistent learning (Taleem). Each session creates a moment of magic—where music becomes a language of self-expression as classrooms turn into an immersive baithak space.

From municipal schools to learning homes and low-income private schools, the diversity of settings where APT has found a home this year is a testament to its relevance and adaptability. The consistent feedback from school teachers and parents reaffirms our belief: Indian traditional arts, when made accessible and engaging, hold the power to transform learning environments.

This year, within the APT Project itself, we tried out a few new ideas:

- A low-touch model that was delivered at 29 schools in the Khandala-Pargaon taluka, Satara district, through a partnership with SVP India, Pune chapter.
- A completely remote model of the APT Project was executed in three schools with the help of local artists and the school team in the Nagpur region.
- The APT Project was run at three tribal schools and two community spaces near Nashik in collaboration with Swades Foundation.



Partners who supported the APT Project:



And many individual supporters

The APT Project: A Closer Look

Supporting young practitioners of traditional art-forms

03

15 Traditional art forms presented

255 Total Anubhav and Parichay sessions

5000+ Children reached through the APT

Teacher testimonial

मागील वर्षभरात महानगरपालिकेच्या संयुक्त विद्यमाने बैठक फाउंडेशनने त्यांचा APT प्रकल्प आमच्या शाळेत राबवला व मुलांनी त्याला भरभरून प्रतिसाद दिला. सर्वात महत्त्वाची बाब अशी की आमच्या शाळेतील मुलांना ज्या गोष्टी कधीही बघायलाही मिळाल्या नाही त्या त्यांना समोर बसून अनुभवता आल्या. हा अनुभव मुलांसाठी आणि शिक्षकांसाठी फार उपयोगी होता.

या सत्रांमुळे मुलांची निरीक्षण शक्ती देखील वाढली. ह्या कार्यक्रमांमुळे परिसरातील अनेक विद्यार्थी आता आमच्या शाळेत दाखल होत आहेत आणि उपस्थितीत बरीच वाढ दिसून येते. या वर्षी आमच्या शाळेला "मुख्यमंत्री माझी शाळा" स्पर्धेत प्रथम पारितोषिक मिळाले व ह्यात बैठकच्या ह्या उपक्रमाचा मोठा हातभार आहे.

बैठक फाउंडेशन व नगरपालिकेचे आभार व आमच्याशाळेत कायमस्वरूपी हा कार्यक्रम राबवावा अशी विनंती.

सौ. आशा निचळ, मुख्याध्यापिका, श्रीमती लिलाबाई कां खिंंसरा प्राथमिक शाळा (मुले), चिंचवड

Students' testimonials

"Muzhe bhi aur jyada knowledge leneki iccha hui"

"Muzhe bharatnatyam dekh kar bohut accha laga aur seekhneki iccha ho rahi hai!"

"Bohot pasand aayi didi ki aavaj"

[Listen to a teacher testimonial here!](#)

125 Total number of artists benefitted

86 Artists' annual income augmented by 10-15% by remuneration from Baithak

28 Artists' annual income augmented by 15-30% by remuneration from Baithak

8 Artists' annual income augmented by 30-50% by remuneration from Baithak

Artist testimonial

Seeing the joy and smiles on the children's faces was incredibly rewarding, and I am glad that my dance could contribute to creating a positive and memorable experience for them. It was a privilege to share my passion for dance in a way that could bring happiness to those who may never have access to such experiences. I must say it was truly a satisfying day.

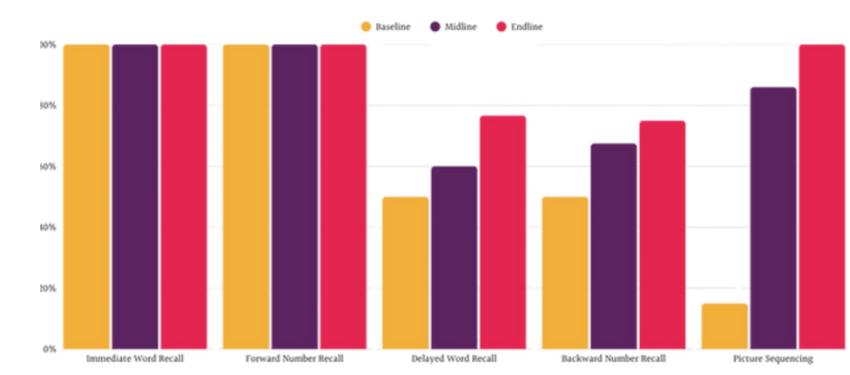
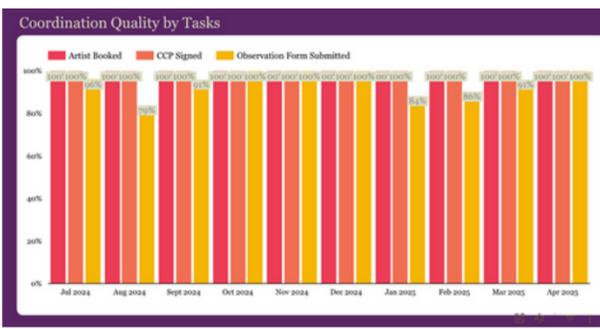
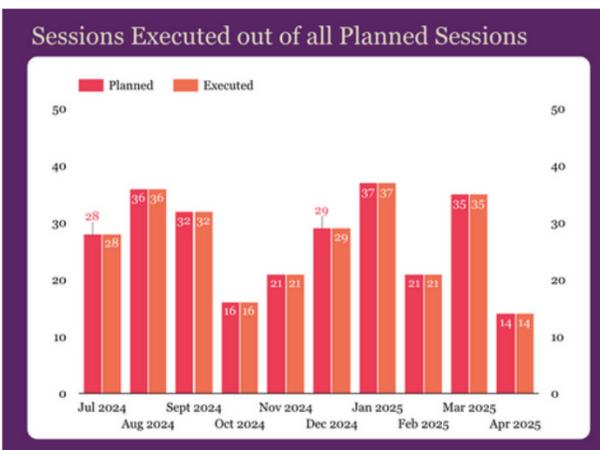
Gauresh Shetkar | Kathak Dancer



The APT Project: Leveraging Data

In the academic year 2023-24 itself, we identified the need for data-driven processes for project execution and capturing impact-related data.

To grow without losing on quality and impact, we partnered with Goalkeep to develop a robust end-to-end data collection system and a dashboard to review our reach, quality of execution and program impact.



While it is impossible to quantify the impact of our intervention, we are currently measuring how the APT Project enables betterment in the following categories:

- Memory and recall
- Attention and concentration
- Storytelling skills

We are happy to share that across all spaces, children have reported positive movement on these parameters.

Before & After

- ✗ **No visibility of planned sessions** ✓ **Full visibility of upcoming sessions**
- ✗ **Lack of criteria and data capturing mechanism for measuring quality of sessions** ✓ **Fully functional system to measure and analyse session quality**
- ✗ **Identifying gaps, lapses and improvement opportunities was very difficult** ✓ **Highly productive weekly dashboard reviews to identify gaps and bridge them**
- ✗ **Reactive processes and remedies** ✓ **Proactive execution and management**
- ✗ **Lack of data led to some months being very hectic for the team and some idle patches without any events** ✓ **Seamless planning and visibility led to uniform distribution of events avoiding team burn out as well as idle times**



Before onboarding a school into the APT Project, we try out 1 or 2 pilot sessions in the school. The idea is to understand the feasibility of launching the APT Project in these spaces.

The pilots help us assess important factors:

- Interest from school teachers/PoCs
- Distances and travel, and stay options
- Interest and involvement of the local artist community

This process has proven invaluable in refining our selection criteria. It has helped us identify schools that are ready and aligned with Baithak's vision. Pilots now play a crucial role in ensuring that our efforts are directed where they are most impactful.

In academic year 2024-25, we conducted pilots in **Nashik, Dapoli, Pen, Sindhudurg** and a few schools in **Pune**.



Dapoli Pilot



Nashik Pilot



Pen Pilot

Preserving the rich traditions of our country



Have you watched our film on the APT Project? If you haven't, [click here to watch.](#)

Share it with friends and believers in the power of music!

Taleem Clubs: Beginning of a life-long journey

Total Taleem Sessions (2024-25): 186
Total Number of Children Undergoing Taleem: 124

Nurturing Discipleship and Rigour

In the year 2024–25, Baithak Foundation's Taleem programme continued to provide children with sustained learning experiences in Indian Traditional Music and Dance.

This year, we ran seven Taleem Clubs across our partner schools and centres, fostering deep engagement and discipline through regular mentorship by expert artists. Children received hands-on training in Kathak, Hindustani Vocal Music, Bharatanatyam, Tabla, and Djembe, with each art form offering a unique window into its rich cultural and aesthetic world.

A significant milestone was when students from P.G. Vaidya School and Balshikshan Manch Centre had the opportunity to showcase their learning through a live performance at an event opening curated by the Ishanya Foundation. This was not just a performance, but a moment of confidence, pride, and validation for the children and their learning journeys.

Similarly, Taleem children from PG Vaidya school also conducted a workshop with their tutor on the occasion of Women's day at Thermax Babcock Wilcox Energy Solutions.



If you don't have a copy yet, [click here to buy one!](#) We promise it will be a wonderful gift to the little ones you know.

In 2019, Baithak Foundation published 'Freddy' - an illustrated book featuring music and the life of Pt. Firoz Dastur. In 2024, we proudly published 'Bhimsen' - an engaging illustrated book on Bharat Ratna Pt. Bhimsen Joshi.

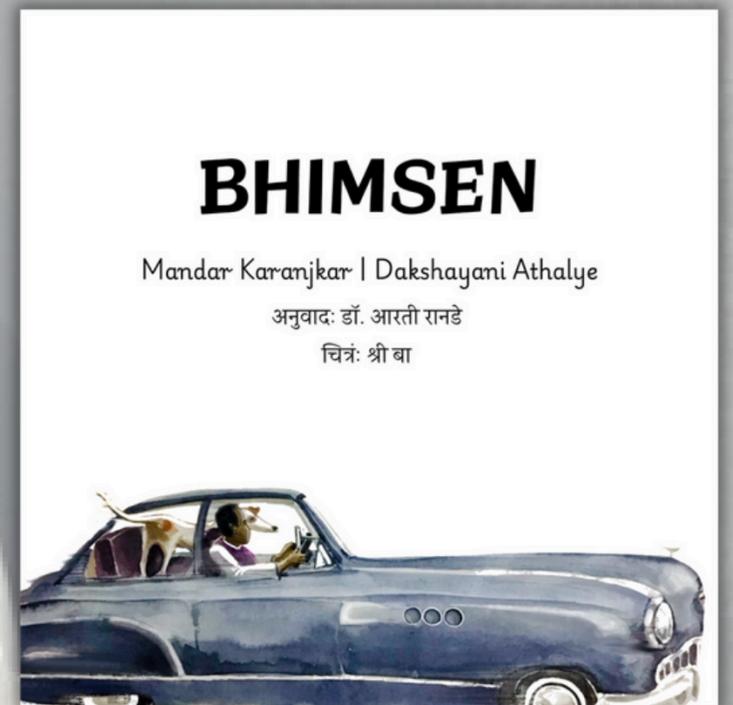
This project was generously supported by the Upadhyaya Foundation.

Written in simple yet engaging language and accompanied by evocative illustrations, "Bhimsen" is written for young readers to explore and connect with Bhimsenji's childhood, his struggles, and his love for music.

Bhimsen was released in the prestigious Sawai Gandharva Bhimsen Mahotsav by Pt. Venkatesh Kumar.

The project would not have been possible without the generous support of the Upadhyaya Foundation, whose shared vision of making Indian Art and Culture accessible to young minds resonates deeply with Baithak's mission. Their support helped bring this idea to life, ensuring quality content, design, and reach.

As a part of the same project, we also undertook the research for publishing a book on Pt. Omkarnath Thakur - a legendary vocalist and an institution builder.



Partner who supported this project:



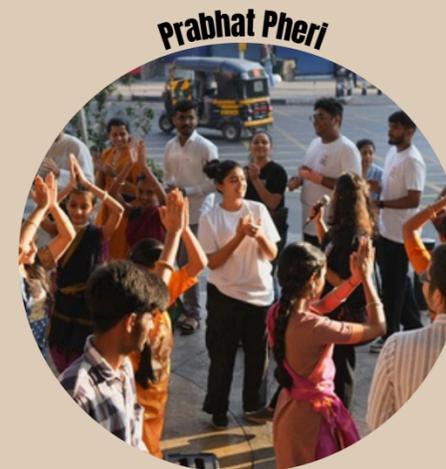
Exploring 'Maya' – The Great Illusion

The Pune Kabir Festival (PKF) returned this year with deeper resonance and renewed energy. A much-anticipated annual celebration of Bhakti, Sufi, and folk traditions, PKF is more than just a festival—it's a city-wide movement that brings communities together through poetry, music, reflection, and shared experiences rooted in the wisdom of Indian saints.

This year, the festival invited us to engage with the theme: **'Maya'** – the great illusion. The week leading up to the festival was filled with outreach events in schools, colleges, after-school centres, and housing societies across Pune. These sessions, led by passionate PKF volunteers, enabled hundreds of young minds to interact with the teachings of Kabir and other saint poets in an accessible and engaging way.

The festival opened with an energetic Prabhat Pheri—a morning procession of music and song that winds through the streets of Pune, awakening the city with the timeless words of the Bhakti poets. The much-loved Samaj Manch, hosted at the Rupa Rahul Bajaj Centre for Environment and Art, once again became a space of uninhibited artistic expression. Here, children, youth, and elders took to the stage to share their interpretations of 'Maya' through poetry, music, storytelling, and movement. This year's curated event featured a performance by Padmashree Prahlad Tipanya from Malwa.

At its heart, PKF remains a people's festival—offering not only artistic engagement but also space for spiritual inquiry, community building, and the timeless relevance of Kabir's voice.



Prabhat Pheri



Samaj Manch



satsang



Jhini



Partner who supported
this project:

BANSURI
FOUNDATION

Curated Concerts

Curating Musical Encounters with Nature and Community

Baithak Foundation continued its partnership with the Rupa Rahul Bajaj Centre for Environment and Arts (RRBCEA) in Pune, curating a series of thoughtfully designed concerts throughout the year. These events aim to bring people closer to the serene and inspiring space of RRBCEA, while offering them enriching experiences in Indian Traditional Music & Dance.

Shishirotsav

Every 1st of January, Baithak marks the beginning of the new year with music, through Shishirotsav — our annual dawn concert. This is followed by a shared breakfast. Shishirotsav continues to be a gentle reminder of how beautifully a year can begin — with stillness, reflection, and melody.

Kshitij Concert and Puraskar

Launched in 2024, the Kshitij Puraskar is an award presented on Baithak Foundation's Foundation Day to two outstanding artists from our community. These are artists who have consistently shown sincerity, excellence, and commitment in their journey and association with Baithak. This award symbolises Baithak's continued belief in nurturing and celebrating artists who embody the ethos of our work. We concluded the evening with a 3-hour Khayal concert by Vidushi Dr. Pournima Dhumale.

Home Concerts

Home Concerts have continued to be one of our most loved formats. We curated more than 10 home concerts for individual patrons and public spaces. These intimate gatherings offered listeners a warm and cosy experience, with performances unfolding in the informal and deeply engaging setting.



[Watch Kshitij awardee Madhura Aphale speak about her experience of working with children.](#)



Tradition is not against innovation. Contrary to popular belief, traditional art forms have survived for hundreds of years due to uninterrupted streams of innovation running within them.

At Baithak, we keep finding new ways of introducing music to children in relatable ways. This year, we developed and tested two new pilot ideas - SoundBox and an indigenously developed card game - Taal, Tara, Vara.

Sound Box

Sound Box, a concept rooted in creative sound exploration, has evolved remarkably over the past year, offering experiences that enhance sound awareness and use sound-based activities for fun and all-around development.

We conducted over 50 Sound Box sessions, where children discovered the endless possibilities of sound, experimented with everyday objects, and learned to listen with new curiosity and imagination through various instruments made from bamboo, wood and other natural materials.



Taal ~ Tara ~ Vara

Taal Tara Vara, Baithak's specially designed card game, got refined through multiple prototypes and design iterations. The game introduces children to various musical instruments and their families, sparking interest in the diversity of sounds and musical traditions.

While still in development, it has already undergone several trials with enthusiastic participants, helping refine the gameplay and content.

It remains a fun and engaging tool for children as well as adults to learn, play, and connect with the world of music, and know the various instruments and instrument families.



We welcomed Anandhi Yagnaraman to the Baithak Foundation Board of Advisors!

With over 24 years of experience in the education and nonprofit sectors, Anandhi has led impactful programs that have reached thousands of schools, making a lasting difference in the lives of children. Her dedication to empowering communities through education and her passion for music align beautifully with our mission at the Baithak Foundation.



We are excited to announce that our co-founder and CEO, Dakshayani Athalye, was selected as an Acumen Fellow! This fellowship is an acknowledgement as well as an opportunity to grow as a change agent and find a community that supports you in this journey.



Our full-time team members are also professional musicians and dancers pursuing their journey as artists. Atharva and Dhanashree from our team completed their Alankar (equivalent to a Masters degree) in Bharatnatyam and Kathak, respectively with distinction.



Our co-founder, Mandar Karanjkar, has been awarded the prestigious CCRT Junior Fellowship offered by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, from 2024 to 2026. The topic of the thesis selected for this fellowship is 'Microtones used in Hindustani Classical Music.'



Baithak supporters and well-wishers, Kalpana Korwar and Dr. Ashok Korwar, conducted a design thinking workshop for our team in October 2024. The intention behind this workshop was to absorb the principles of design thinking and make them an integral part of program delivery at Baithak.



Press and Outreach

PUNE IS TALKING ABOUT WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2025 PUNE TIMES, THE TIMES OF INDIA 3

Kabir's dohas, art and music by the riverside



Dhere dhere ra mana, dhere reh kuch haye... *Maai soche ma khada, rahe aayan, jal haye.* This doha by Sant Kabir Das, which talks about things happening at their pace and a person's work gradually bearing fruit, struck a chord with many on Sunday morning, at the Mula-Ramadi confluence near Savar. Hundreds of people gathered at the sangam for the Pune Kabir Festival to soak in the writings of Kabir, music and art, surrounded by greenery. "This is the best place I've ever witnessed a musical performance at," said

Niranjan, one of the attendees, who also highlighted the significance of Kabir's literature and its connection with the environment. The venue for the event, organised by Baithak Foundation in collaboration with the Ecological Society and Nadi Bachao movement, was chosen to create awareness about the river and its ecosystem. Performances by young classical musicians at ISIR and a show by Prabhat Tipanya, who performs Kabir's bhajans in Mula style, were among the highlights of the event. —Ansh Gokulkar

I have been working for river conservation for years and I feel a fest like this gives people the opportunity to understand Sant Kabir and the environment, that too in a beautiful setting. —Tanishka Wagh, a student of climate finance

Hundreds gathered at the venue to soak in the writings of Kabir, music and art.

Collaboration and community engagement as two important pillars of the fest. Our intention is that Sant Kabir and this festival become a medium for discovering our connection with each other and the universe. —Dakshayani Athalaye, one of the organisers

Vinay Venkatesh

Hundreds gathered at the venue to soak in the writings of Kabir, music and art.

Listen to Mandar and Dakshayani's Swayan talk here!

If you're into classical music

Ameeras
Where: Mazda Hall, Dastur School, Camp
When: **Today**
Time: 7 pm



A musical elixir of mystical poetry and contemporary classical pieces

Anjali Jhangiani
@timesofindia.com

Pune: In the realm of Indian classical music, Mandar Karanjkar's Ameeras promises to be a transcendent experience, with the profound wisdom of mystic poetry set against the backdrop of captivating melodies.

"Ameeras, a word found in the poetry of Saint Raidas, means divine nectar and elixir of 'immortality,'" Karanjkar said. "The programme features many such beautiful words, phrases, and ideas from po-

enced our culture. Through the programme, we aim to make audiences reflect on deep philosophical questions such as what is life / love / spirituality? and so on," he said.

On a mission to bring the profound verses of lesser-known saints to life through his music, Karanjkar's journey began at the age of seven when he started learning classical music and reading saint poetry.

"I came across the works of lesser-known saints, such as Palta Sahab and Dadu Dayal. Some words that they used in their poetry sounded beautiful when it was sung in a tune, and I started composing music to capture their beauty," he said.

"I used to find myself thinking about how to introduce these beautiful words through my music. Some of them matched very well with



point in time."

In 2016, he shared his experimentation by fitting the words of saint poetry into his composed tunes among his musician friends and received positive feedback. This encourage-

ment was a strong sense of separation — "I'm going to die now if I don't see my beloved". But some later compositions also talk about how he is complete in himself — "The universe is inside me". How he travelled from this separation to this completeness, how he found the nectar of completeness and immortality is the story we tell through the show."

The programme also features a Q&A session at the end, where the audience can pose their questions on music, spirituality, poetry, and philosophy to the performers.

This unique collaboration between Baithak Foundation, Spotlight Forum, and The Poona Music Society will be staged at Mazda Hall on October 19 at 7 pm. As Karanjkar said, "Come for the music, stay for the Q&A."

वाबळेवाडी शाळेत स्वरोत्सव कार्यक्रमाचे आयोजन: बैठक फाउंडेशन यांजकडून नाविन्यपूर्ण उपक्रम

पुणे - विवेकानंद फंड पुणे: जिल्हा परिषद प्राथमिक शाळा वाबळेवाडी येथे बैठक फाउंडेशन यांजकडून स्वरोत्सव कार्यक्रमाचे आयोजन करण्यात आले होते. या कार्यक्रमात विद्यार्थी, पालक, ग्रामस्थ आणि शिक्षकांनी उत्तम प्रतिसाद दिला. यात गायन, वादन, नृत्य कलाधिकार आदी कार्यक्रमांचे आयोजन करण्यात आले होते.

कार्यक्रमाची सुरुवात गणेश वंदनेने भरतनाट्यम नृत्य प्रकराने झाली. त्यानंतर शाळेतील यश नवबंदे याने मन लागीं लागीं गुरु भावनी हा अभंग सादर केला. त्याला तबलवादक ज्ञानेश याचकाबाद याने साव दिले. तर अंधित्री करजे हिने सुंदर भरतनाट्यम सादर केले. त्याला विद्यार्थ्यांनी टाळ्यांची वाद देत उत्तम प्रतिसाद दिला. त्यानंतर दाक्षायणी आठवले, मंदार कारंजकर, तेजस कुलकर्णी यांनी आपल्या सुमधुर गायनाने कार्यक्रमाची सुरुवात केली. त्याला हार्मोनियम वादक लीलधर चक्रदेव व तबलवादक अंजकरी योडकर यांनी सुंदर साव दिले. तसेच नृत्य कलाकार अर्पण चौधरी यांनी भरतनाट्यम तर धनश्री जोगळेकर हिने कवक प्रकार सादर केला.

उपस्थित सिसकांनी टाळ्यांची जोरदार वाद देत त्यांना उत्तम प्रतिसाद दिला.

वाबळेवाडी आंतरराष्ट्रीय शाळेचे शिष्यवर्ग व जिल्हा परिषद प्राथमिक शाळा जालंदरनगर शाळेचे मुख्याध्यापक दत्तात्रय कोरे, पालक भानुदास शोडगे, योगेश करंदे, अविनारा ताडे, गणेश साठे, संभाजी गोरे, मुकुंदलु शाळेचे मुख्याध्यापक हेमराज कोरे आणि धनश्री कोरे यावेळी उपस्थित होते.

याप्रसंगी शाळेचे मुख्याध्यापक, शिारू तातुका प्राथमिक शिक्षक पारसंबेचे माजी



मंदार कारंजकर दाक्षायणी आठवले

वैभव व शिष्यवर्ग तज्ञ विजय गोडसे, अरुणा चौधकर, सुनिल पलडे, जयश्री पलडे, किरण अरगडे, गौरव काळे, प्रतिभा पुंडे, दीपक खैरे, तुषार सिनलकर, पोपट दरंदले, विद्या सफकाळ, वैशाली जगतप, गितांजली बाबळे आणि साहित्यिक शिक्षक सचिन बेडभर उपस्थित होते.

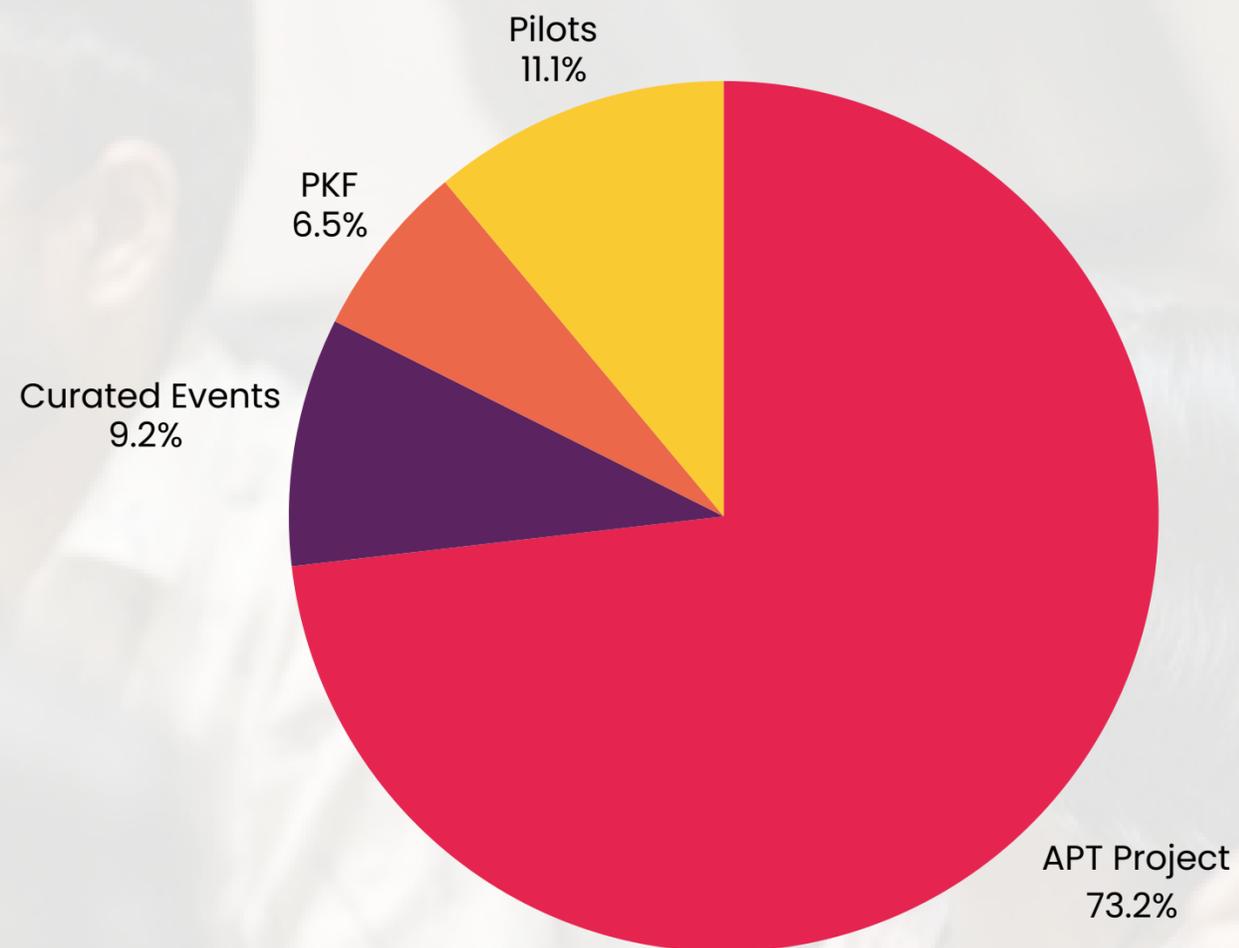
तर शाळा व्यवस्थापन समिती अध्यक्ष संदीप बाबळे, उपाध्यक्ष मल्हारी बाबळे, ग्रामपंचायत सदस्य प्रकाशकाका बाबळे, माजी उपसरपंच केदार बाबळे, याश कविटीचे अध्यक्ष अंजुला बाबळे, सवित्रा बाबळे, सुरेखा बाबळे, सवित्रा कोटवाल, प्रकाश विठ्ठल बाबळे आदी मान्यवर कार्यक्रमात उपस्थित होते.

कार्यक्रमाचे सूत्रसंचालन साहित्यिक शिक्षक सचिन बेडभर यांनी केले. स्वागत तुषार सिनलकर, प्रास्ताविक किरण अरगडे तर आभार पोपट दरंदले यांनी मानले.

Financials for FY 2024-25

Total funds received: INR 1, 22, 93,922

Total funds utilised: INR 1,03,01,506



Key supporters:

- Shree Rukmineesh Seva Trust
- Upadhyaya Foundation
- SVP India – Pune Chapter
- Kotak Mahindra Investments Ltd.
- Precision Camshafts Ltd.
- Sanghvi Movers Ltd.
- Bansuri Foundation
- Supreme Petrochem Ltd.
- Western Heatforge
- Cherry Constructions Ltd.

Outlook for Academic Year 2025-26

By the time we finish and publish this report, a lot will have happened. The academic year 2025-26 already looks busier for us. Here is what we have in store:

- The APT Project will be running at 120 schools.
- We will be launching pilots in two focus areas: persons with special needs and disabilities, and early childhood care and education.
- The APT Project is witnessing increasing demands for replication in multiple cities outside of Maharashtra, and we are exploring the possibility of sharing our experiences with these potential partners.

Along with our corporate and institutional supporters, we are immensely grateful to a large number of individual donors who believe in and support our work year on year.



BAITHAK



Support Baithak!
Help us spread the joy of music.

Baithak Foundation

+91 87671 20470

hello@baithak.org

www.baithak.org



Thank You!

