

Vinimay's Home for homeless youth

Staff Reporter / Vashi

WHEN the time-tested system of 'family' fails, children are the ones to suffer most. To take care of these vulnerable (i.e. orphaned, neglected, unwanted, victimised etc.) children, human society has developed many systems, most effective of them being child welfare institutions (CWIS).

However, boys can live in CWIS only upto the age of 18, after which they are expected to be independent. This is a very difficult task for them because their economic status, educational levels, social exposure and emotional stability are much lower than the boys of the same age in the community

sense of belonging and social orientation through activities which boost their self-image and gives them opportunities for social interaction.

To bring these youth welfare programmes under one roof, Vinimay has now built a hostel at Koparkhairne for boys who leave child welfare institutions at the age of 18. The hostel, called Smt. Coomiben Babubhai Shah Tarun Sadan, can presently house 25 destitute boys; eventually the hostel will be expanded to house 50 boys from the present strength of 10 boys.

The hostel was inaugurated on May 23. Prof. M.S.Gore, ex. Director of TISS presided over the



Mr. Babubhai Shah seen inaugurating the Smt. Coomiben Babubhai Shah Tarun Sadan at Koparkhairne recently. Also seen are Prof. M.S.Gore and Mrs. Kalindi Muzumdar.

With these handicaps and with no one to guide them, they lose out in the highly complicated and competitive world: they feel rootless, lose interest in living, get exploited or fall prey to anti-social elements. Consequently, in many cases, their children face the same situations which they faced when they were young.

Thus all the great and noble work done by CWIS in bringing up these children upto the age of 18 yields very poor results.

For the last 15 years, Vinimay Trust has been assisting such boys till they are in a position to look after themselves. Vinimay helps them with subsidised living accommodation, job placements, medical assistance, housing loans, higher education and help in personal crises.

Above all, Vinimay has been able to give them a

function and Prof. Mrs. Kalindi Muzumdar, ex-Vice Principal of Nirmala Niketan College of Social Services delivered the key-note address.

The size of the hostel has been kept small to ensure that each boy can get individual attention and groomed to become well-adjusted and independent citizens. The hostel will be a 'home' for the boys in the real sense. The future of each boy will be planned individually and in consultation with him. There will be no regimentation and the boys will be gently guided and helped to overcome his social handicaps and inhibitions.

Vinimay appeals for financial assistance for providing basic needs, technical training and education to the destitute boys under its care. More details can be availed from L.Venkataraman (5578130) or Atul Shah (7663429).