

"We Have a Dream" say the Girls of the World

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD 2024

Good Shepherd Sisters function as Change Agents

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd, inspired by the teachings and example of their Foundress, St. Mary Euphrasia, dedicate themselves to the empowerment and emancipation of girls and women worldwide. St. Mary Euphrasia believed in providing a safe, supportive environment for women and girls, particularly for those at the margins of our society. Her vision focused on offering practical education, spiritual guidance, and emotional support, enabling women and girls to break free from cycles of poverty, abuse, and exploitation.

One of the core principles of the Sisters' work is their grassroots approach. This means that they engage directly with local communities, understanding the unique needs and challenges faced by women and girls in specific cultural, economic, and social contexts. By working on the ground, they can sow seeds for a sustainable change, building trust and empowering individuals to become active participants in their own transformation.

The Sisters' efforts are often centred around providing education, vocational training, and social services to women and girls, helping them to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to live independently and with dignity. They also work to raise awareness about the importance of gender equality and the need to protect girls from harmful practices, such as trafficking, forced labour, and domestic violence.

Campaign for Girl Child Rights

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd have long been committed to advocating for the rights and welfare of girl children. This commitment has become a fundamental part of their mission, particularly through their active involvement in campaigns aimed at raising awareness about the issues affecting young girls. Since the United Nations established International Day of the Girl Child on October 11th, the Sisters have consistently organized public campaigns to mark this important day, fostering greater understanding and action on behalf of vulnerable girls worldwide.

These annual campaigns not only highlight the challenges faced by girl children but also advocate for practical solutions to improve their lives. The focus is on education, protection from exploitation, access to healthcare, and promoting gender equality. Through these events, the Sisters work to create platforms where communities can come together to discuss and address the specific needs of girl children.

Observation of International Day of the Girl Child 2024

The International Day of the Girl Child, observed on October 11, 2024, holds deep significance in recognizing and addressing the unique challenges faced by girls around the world. In Amaravati, located in Palnad District of Andhra Pradesh, India, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd marked this important day with a public meeting organized in collaboration with local government departments concerned with child welfare. This event was part of their

ongoing advocacy for the rights of girl children and served as a vital platform for various stakeholders—government representatives, civil society, and community members—to come together and discuss critical issues such as education, health, protection from exploitation, and gender equality. The collaboration between the Sisters and government departments emphasized the collective responsibility of society in ensuring the well-being of girl children, fostering a shared commitment to creating a safer, more equitable environment for them. This unified effort is essential to amplify the voices of girls and ensure that their needs and aspirations are not overlooked. The International Day of the Girl Child also plays an important role in raising global awareness about the broader challenges women and girls face, such as gender-based violence, child marriage, and unequal access to resources and opportunities. It serves as a call to action for all to work towards concrete strategies that empower and uplift girls, encouraging not just dialogue, but impactful change.

The theme for International Day of the Girl Child 2024, “Girls’ Vision for the Future,” highlights the importance of both immediate action and sustained efforts. It underscores the need to listen to and support the aspirations of girls, recognizing their capacity to shape a brighter, more inclusive future. The theme also reflects the power of girls’ voices as agents of change, calling on all to stand with them in building a world where every girl can realize her full potential. Sr. Vinnarasi, the Director of the Good Shepherd Convent in Amaravati, led the meeting alongside her Partners-in-Mission, demonstrating the strength of collaboration in driving positive social change.

CAMPAIGNS FOR CHILD RIGHTS – 2 DAYS

The two-day campaign, held on 10th and 11th October 2024, was an important step in raising awareness and empowering women and girls. The first day, dedicated to women and adolescent girls from different projects, as well as other interested women and girls, focused on educating them about their rights and how they can advocate for themselves. A key message emphasized was the equal value of girls and boys, ensuring that girls recognize their worth and are aware of their rights to equality. It was crucial to help both women and girls understand that their voices matter and that they have the power to stand up for their rights.

On the second day, the focus shifted to engaging with local NGOs and Government Departments, ensuring that the voices of the girls were not only heard but also acted upon. By involving different sectors of society, particularly local governments, the campaign aimed to create meaningful change, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts to protect and empower girls.

These initiatives closely align with several key United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those focused on gender equality, child rights, and community empowerment. Specifically, they address Goal 5: Gender Equality, which aims to end discrimination, violence, and harmful practices against women and girls, ensuring equal participation in leadership and decision-making processes. By fostering awareness of rights and empowering women and girls to advocate for themselves, the campaign directly contributes to these targets.

Moreover, the campaign supports Goal 4: Quality Education, by providing critical information about rights and equality to women and girls, ensuring they have the knowledge needed to pursue their ambitions and participate fully in society. Education and awareness are foundational to empowering individuals and fostering long-term change, which aligns with the goal of ensuring inclusive and equitable education for all.

The campaign also speaks to Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities, as it addresses the need for social and economic inclusion of women and girls, helping to dismantle barriers that have historically held them back. By promoting gender equality and the rights of girls, these efforts help narrow the inequality gap, ensuring that girls and women are recognized as equal contributors to society. Additionally, Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions is reflected in the emphasis on creating supportive and accountable systems that ensure the rights of girls are protected. Working with local government departments and NGOs strengthens institutional frameworks that protect girls, enabling a more just and inclusive environment.

By targeting these interconnected SDGs, the campaign underscores the need for collective, community-based action to empower and uplift girls everywhere. Empowering women and girls not only improve their lives but also has a ripple effect on entire communities, contributing to healthier, more prosperous, and more equitable societies. These initiatives are vital reminders that when women and girls are empowered, they are better able to lead, inspire, and positively influence their families, communities, and beyond, helping to build the foundation for a more just and equal world. In this way, the campaign serves as both a local and global call to action—demonstrating that empowering girls is not just an ethical imperative, but an essential part of sustainable development.

DAY 1 – 10th October 2024

Public Meeting with Women and Girls

Women and girls have long been marginalized and often regarded as second-class citizens, a reality that persists in many parts of the world, including India. Despite constitutional guarantees and laws that affirm their equal rights, women and girls in India continue to face systemic discrimination. They are often seen as mere recipients of aid and protection, rather than active participants in society who deserve the same opportunities and respect as men and boys. The pervasive cultural norms and societal attitudes that perpetuate these beliefs are deeply ingrained, creating barriers that prevent women and girls from fully realizing their potential. To bridge this gender gap, there is an urgent need to amplify the voices of women and girls, giving them the platform and support to stand up for their rights and demand equality. This requires a concerted effort to challenge and change societal perceptions, empower women and girls, and push for stronger advocacy and action on gender issues.

In response to this need, on the 1st day of the campaign, women and girls were invited to participate in a public meeting organized at the Good Shepherd Convent campus, Amaravathi. This event served as a vital opportunity to bring together local women, adolescent girls, and other members of the community, offering them a space to discuss their rights, share experiences, and learn how to advocate for themselves. The focus was on raising awareness

about the importance of gender equality and empowering women and girls to understand and claim their rights. During the meeting, speakers highlighted the constitutional and legal protections that women and girls are entitled to under Indian law. However, they also acknowledged that laws alone are not enough; the cultural and societal mindset that still holds women and girls back must be addressed. The discussions emphasized the importance of education, economic independence, and participation in decision-making processes as key factors in achieving gender equality. By coming together in this setting, the women and girls were able to foster a sense of solidarity and support, reminding each other that they are not alone in their struggle for equality. The event encouraged them to recognize their power and agency, as well as the need to advocate for both their personal rights and the broader societal changes necessary to bridge the gender gap.

This campaign serves as a call to action—a reminder that women and girls are not just recipients of charity or protection, but are equal partners in society who deserve every opportunity to thrive.

Following is the list of special invitees to address the women and girl children:

- **Father Bhaskar**, Director, Pallotti Junior College, Amaravati
- **Ms. Shaik Imambi**, ICDS Supervisor, Amaravati
- **Ms. Bharathi**, ICDS Supervisor, Tadikonda
- **Sr. Arogya Mary**, Teacher, St. Augustine English Medium School, Amaravati
- **Sr. Vinnarasi**, Director & Superior, Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravati
- **Sr. Gracy** Subsite Director of CHALICE Educational & Community Sponsorship Programme, of Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravathi
- **Ms. Shaik Shahin**, Student, Good Shepherd Computer and Spoken English Course

Each of these distinguished individuals played a pivotal role in supporting and enriching the event, reflecting a shared commitment to the empowerment and welfare of girl children.

Fr. Bhaskar, Director, Pallotti Junior College, Amaravathi

In his maiden speech, Father Bhaskar emphasized the significance of observing the International Day of the Girl Child 2024, held on October 11, which aims to raise awareness about the unique challenges that girls face and promote their empowerment. The theme for this year, “Girls’ Vision for the Future,” underscores the importance of addressing critical issues such as gender inequality, child marriage, and the limited access to education and healthcare that many girls around the world still encounter.

At the outset of his speech, Fr. Bhaskar extended heartfelt wishes to the girl children and all participants in honor of this special day. He expressed a deep concern for India's development, acknowledging that while the country has made significant strides in science and technology, it continues to face setbacks due to societal and cultural challenges. He called upon everyone present to reflect on their role in shaping a better future, asking, "Please raise your hand if you are ready to change our world."

Fr. Bhaskar pointed out that 'education' is the cornerstone of national progress, emphasizing its critical role in empowering individuals and communities. "Education is the most important factor in developing our country," he said, highlighting that it is through education that people can become self-sufficient and make meaningful contributions to society. However, he also noted the detrimental impact of technology, particularly smartphones, which he believes are negatively influencing the youth. "The phone is the major factor that is destroying our lives," he observed, citing the prevalence of distractions like social media, smoking, substance abuse, and alcohol consumption.

Reflecting on his own experiences, Fr. Bhaskar shared how his education had enabled him to travel the world and achieve personal and professional growth. Yet, he pointed out an important concern: "After receiving the benefits from the sisters and fathers, many do not return to help others." He emphasized the importance of giving back and nurturing a culture of support and kindness, as demonstrated by the Good Shepherd Convent, where sisters have helped countless individuals. However, he lamented that, of the many who had received help, not a single one had returned to support the sisters in their mission.

Fr. Bhaskar also spoke critically about the male-dominated nature of society and stressed the need for change. He urged everyone to contribute to building a more inclusive and equitable world where both women and men can thrive equally. In closing, he called for a collective effort to transform society, acknowledging that such change would require commitment from each and every one of us. "Let's work together to build a better, more just world for the future," he concluded.

Mrs. Bharathi, ICDS Supervisor, Tadikonda

Mrs. Bharathi, Supervisor of Integrated Child Development Services, Tadikonda, began her speech by reflecting on India's long journey to independence, noting, "We gained independence on 15th August 1947, but our women gained true freedom much later." She highlighted an important historical figure, Eleanor Roosevelt, who, though not directly connected to India, became a global symbol of women's empowerment. Roosevelt was born on October 11, 1884, and she championed women's rights and equality throughout her life, inspiring movements for the empowerment of women and girls worldwide. In honour of her contributions, October 11th is observed as International Day of the Girl Child, a day to recognize and address the issues that affect girls globally.

Mrs. Bharathi emphasized the transformative power of education, stating, "A girl should be educated so that she can stand on her own feet." She stressed that education is the key to empowering girls and ensuring they have the ability to live independently and contribute meaningfully to society.

Drawing a metaphor from nature, she said, "New water comes only when old water goes away." This metaphor reflects the idea that growth and progress come from letting go of the past, acknowledging that the challenges and limitations of yesterday should not hold us back. "The past is gone; leave it behind and move ahead toward a better future," she encouraged. This call to action is a reminder to focus on building a brighter, more equitable tomorrow.

Finally, Mrs. Bharathi touched upon the importance of compassion and generosity. "We should be able to help others as well," she said, encouraging everyone to not only focus on their own development but to also contribute to the well-being of those around them. By supporting one

another, she believes that we can create a more compassionate and inclusive society for future generations.

Sr. Arogya Mary, Teacher from St. Augustine English Medium School, Amaravathi

Sr. Arogya Mary, a teacher from St. Augustine English Medium School in Amaravati, began her deliberation by emphasizing the importance of wisdom in our lives. She shared a profound insight, stating, "Wisdom begins when we learn to love and respect our parents." Sr. Arogya Mary encouraged the audience, particularly the young girls, to develop a culture of open communication with their parents, highlighting that it is crucial to share both moments of happiness and challenges with them. She underscored the significance of the mother as the first teacher in a child's life, saying, "Our mother is our first teacher." Through her nurturing and guidance, mothers play an essential role in shaping our character and imparting valuable life lessons. She stressed the importance of learning from the wisdom and experiences of those closest to us, particularly mothers, who serve as pillars of support and guidance.

Sr. Arogya Mary also addressed a common challenge faced by many young people today: the temptation to confide in peers of the same age group. She advised, "Don't share your problems with friends of the same age group; instead, confide in those who are older and have more life experience." By seeking advice from those who have lived through similar experiences and gained wisdom over time, young people can receive more thoughtful, perspective-driven guidance. Her message was clear: while friendships are valuable, it is equally important to seek support from mentors, elders, and family members who can offer wisdom and direction that comes with age and experience. Through such meaningful relationships, she believes young girls can navigate life's challenges more effectively and develop a sense of balance, maturity, and confidence.

Shaik. Imambi, Supervisor of Integrated Child Development Services, Amaravathi

Ms. Shaik Imambi, Supervisor of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in Amaravati, began her address by extending warm wishes to everyone in observance of the International Day of the Girl Child. She expressed her strong stance on an important issue, saying, "Child marriage is a crime, and it must not be allowed to happen." She urged the audience to stand firm against this harmful practice, emphasizing that a girl child should not be married before 18 years of age, and a boy child before 21 years. Ms. Imambi shared an example of her proactive efforts in addressing child marriage. She recalled a recent case where her team intervened and filed a complaint against a family planning to marry off a child. "We took action and ensured that the marriage was stopped," she said, highlighting the critical role of vigilance and community support in preventing such illegal practices.

She then encouraged everyone to be proactive in their communities. "We are here for you," she reassured the audience, urging them to report any suspected cases of child marriage to the Child Marriage Probation Officers (CMPOs) in their areas. "If you notice any child marriage in your locality, please consult with the CMPOs immediately," she urged, emphasizing the importance of early intervention in protecting children from such violations of their rights. Ms. Imambi's message was clear: preventing child marriage is a collective responsibility, and with awareness and vigilance, we can ensure that children are given the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive without being subjected to such harmful practices.

Shaik Shahin, a student of the Good Shepherd Computer and Spoken English Course

Shaik Shahin, a student of the Good Shepherd Computer and Spoken English Course, began her speech by wishing everyone a Happy International Girl Child Day. She expressed her belief that both girls and boys contribute to the development of our country, starting from their homes and families. She highlighted the importance of the PNDT Act (Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act) introduced in 1961, which aims to protect the rights of children and prevent gender-based discrimination. Shahina acknowledged the valuable role of NGOs like the Good Shepherd Convent, which educate children about their rights and laws related to their welfare. She encouraged others to take advantage of such organizations to secure a better future.

She shared her personal story of having to stop her studies after the 10th grade but expressed gratitude for the opportunity to continue her education through the computer and spoken English course. Inspired by the support from the Good Shepherd Convent and motivated by her parents' encouragement, Shahina is now eager to continue her studies after completing this course. She concluded with heartfelt thanks for the opportunity that the convent has given her, expressing her happiness and optimism for the future.

Sr. Vinnarasi, Director of Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravati

In her speech, Sr. Vinnarasi extended her heartfelt wishes for a Happy International Girl Child Day to everyone present. She emphasized the need for a collective commitment to end child marriages in Amaravati, Pedakurapadu, and Krosur Mandal. "We must make a strong decision to stop child marriages in our communities," she urged, highlighting that despite the efforts of the Good Shepherd Convent to raise awareness, child marriages are still occurring in society. She pointed out that families often come to them for counselling related to marital disputes and divorce, believing that marriage would relieve them of their problems, only to face new challenges.

Sr. Vinnarasi explained that many individuals think that getting married will "solve" their problems, but the reality is that child marriage often brings more hardship and difficulties. She urged the audience to take action and provided important contact numbers for those who witness child marriages, saying, "You can stop child marriages by dialling the toll-free numbers 1098, 100, 181, and 112." These numbers connect to child protection and emergency services that can help prevent and intervene in cases of child marriage. She passionately declared, "Girls are beautiful and a blessing to the home," reminding everyone of the inherent value of every girl child. She encouraged girls to face the challenges they encounter with courage, adopting the empowering affirmation, "I am a blessing and beautiful".

Sr. Vinnarasi also addressed the importance of mutual respect between boys and girls. "Boys should respect their mothers, sisters, and life partners," she said, emphasizing that boys and girls are equal within the family. She warned against comparing boys and girls, asserting that both deserve equal opportunities and respect. She also raised a concern about the detrimental influence of bad habits in their community. "Many of our beneficiaries from Amaravati, Krosur, and Pedakurapadu have ruined their lives with habits like smoking, drinking, and drug use," she noted. She called on parents to be vigilant about their children's behaviour and to monitor their movements and activities carefully. "Parents must keep a watchful eye to prevent

these harmful habits," she advised, stressing the role of family in safeguarding the well-being of young people.

In conclusion, Sr. Vinnarasi called for unity and action to create a better future for all children, especially girls, through awareness, respect, and responsibility within the community.

Certificate Distribution

The Adolescent Girls who successfully completed their Computer Applications Skills and Spoken English Course were awarded their course completion certificates by Father Bhaskar. As he handed over the certificates, he expressed his appreciation for the efforts and determination shown by the girls in completing the course. Father Bhaskar was visibly pleased to acknowledge their hard work and commitment.

The girls, in turn, expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the Sisters and Partners-in-Mission of the Good Shepherd Convent for making this opportunity possible. They thanked the team for their dedication and support throughout the course, which has empowered them with valuable skills for their future. The ceremony marked a significant milestone in the girls' educational journey, reinforcing their confidence and determination to continue striving for success.

Gratitude to the Organizers

The successful celebration of the International Day of the Girl Child was made possible through the collaborative efforts of many individuals and organizations. Sr. Vinnarasi, Director of Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravati, played a pivotal role in coordinating the entire event, ensuring that every detail was well-organized and meaningful.

Mr. B. Babu, Senior Social Worker with the Child Rights Project, extended a warm welcome to the NGOs, government officials, adolescent girls, and other guests who attended the celebration. His welcoming words set the tone for the day, highlighting the importance of the occasion and the collective commitment to promoting the rights of girl children.

Mr. Thandu Laxman, Senior Social Worker at Good Shepherd Amaravati, took on the important role of Master of Ceremonies, guiding the program smoothly and keeping the audience engaged throughout the celebration.

Finally, Mr. Nuthakki Dileep Kumar, English Tutor cum Partner-in-Mission of the Adolescent Girls Project, expressed heartfelt thanks to all the participants for their active involvement and contribution to making the day a success. His words of gratitude underscored the spirit of collaboration and community that made the event memorable.

Together, the efforts of these dedicated individuals ensured that the celebration was not only well-organized but also impactful, leaving a lasting impression on everyone involved.

DAY 2 – 11th October 2024

Working with Government Departments for Girls' Rights

The second day of the campaign, 11th October 2024, focused on collaborating with officials from Government Departments that deal with issues related to women and children. The goal was to engage those in positions of authority and decision-making, as their involvement is crucial for enacting long-term change. 'Efforts of Government is bringing lasting change in the lives of the people' suggests that the actions and initiatives taken by the government are having a significant and enduring impact on the lives of its citizens. It implies that the government is working to implement policies, programs, or reforms that lead to positive, long-term improvements in various aspects of people's lives, such as their economic conditions, education, healthcare, infrastructure, or overall well-being. By working closely with these officials, the campaign aimed to ensure that the needs and rights of girl children are prioritized in policy-making and government programs. It is strongly believed that such collaborations will lead to more effective implementation of laws and policies, resulting in tangible improvements in the lives of girls, particularly in areas like education, health, safety, and economic empowerment.

The program was held at the District Collector's Office in Narasaraopet, Palnadu District, and was attended by government officials and NGO representatives. The event featured special addresses by officials from various departments, as well as representatives from non-governmental organizations. The highlight of the campaign was the distribution of cash awards to adolescent girls who had successfully completed vocational training. This recognition not only celebrated their achievements but also served as an encouragement for more young girls to pursue vocational skills, enhancing their opportunities for employment and self-reliance.

Special Invitees & Speakers:

Mr. K. Vinayakam District Revenue Officer, Palnadu District

Mrs. Umamaheswari, Project Director of Integrated Child Development Services

Mrs. Durgarani, ASSIST Organization, Andhra Pradesh

Dr. B. Ravi, District Medical & Health Officer (DMHO), Palnadu District

Mrs. Revathi, Supervisor, Integrated Child development Services

Members from the District Child Protection Department

Girls Must Grow Up and Climb High Peaks

The Chief Guest of the day Mr. K. Vinayakam, the District Revenue Officer of Palnadu District in his speech said that girls must and should grow up and climb high peaks at the national and international level. This highlights the importance of empowering and encouraging girls to reach their full potential and achieve success in various fields, both within their own country and globally. It advocates for gender equality in opportunities, aiming for girls to overcome barriers and pursue ambitious goals. His statement is an inspiring call for society to support and uplift girls, ensuring they have the resources, confidence, and opportunities to reach their full potential. It challenges existing norms and encourages girls to break barriers and excel on

both national and international platforms, advocating for gender equality in success and leadership.

Girls must be Protected from Illness, Malnutrition, and Violence

Mrs. Umamaheswari, the Project Director of Integrated Child Development Services, emphasized the critical need to protect girls under the age of eighteen from several vulnerabilities. In her deliberation, she highlighted that girls at this age are particularly susceptible to issues such as illness, malnutrition, illiteracy, and violence, all of which can have long-term detrimental effects on their development. She stressed that addressing these challenges is essential for ensuring their overall well-being and future prospects. Through proper care, education, and protection, society can help girls grow into healthy, educated, and empowered individuals who can contribute meaningfully to society.

Girls, like all children, have the right to good health, proper nutrition, and quality education, which are crucial for their physical, mental, and emotional development. When deprived of these opportunities, girls face significant barriers to reaching their full potential, which can perpetuate cycles of poverty, inequality, and limited social mobility. Ensuring equal access to health services, nutritious food, and education is key to empowering girls and fostering a more just and equitable society.

Girls must Acquire Skills to Shape their Bright Future

Mrs. Durgarani from ASSIST Social Service Organisation, in her speech, emphasized the importance of girls acquiring essential skills to shape a bright and successful future. She highlighted that in today's rapidly changing world, equipping girls with the right knowledge, abilities, and competencies is key to empowering them to overcome challenges, seize opportunities, and contribute meaningfully to society. By acquiring these skills, girls can unlock their full potential and pave the way for a future filled with success and independence. Mrs. Durgarani urged everyone to support and invest in the education and skill development of girls.

Girls must Grab Every Opportunity to Develop their Vocational Skills

Sr. Vinnarasi, Director of Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravathi, in her speech, emphasized the importance of girls seizing every opportunity to develop their vocational skills. She highlighted the vocational courses offered by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, which have been particularly beneficial for school dropout adolescent girls and young women. These programs have provided them with practical skills, enabling them to secure employment, increase their family income, and live lives of dignity. Sr. Vinnarasi stressed that such initiatives are vital in empowering women, helping them break the cycle of poverty, and fostering greater self-reliance and confidence.

Honouring Commitment: Championing the Cause of Girl Children

As a token of appreciation, government officials presented a Shawl of Honour and a memento to Sr. Vinnarasi, Director of Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravathi, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to advocating for the rights of girl children in Palnadu District. Sr. Vinnarasi has been instrumental in empowering young girls through education, vocational

training, and skill development, ensuring their well-being and growth. Her tireless efforts have made a significant impact on improving the lives of many adolescent girls in the region, helping them overcome challenges and build a brighter future. The gesture acknowledged her dedication and commitment to the cause.

Awards to Girls of Excellence

As a token of appreciation, Dr. B. Ravi, the District Medical & Health Officer (DMHO) of Palnadu District, presented cash awards of Rs. 10,000 each to the girls who demonstrated exceptional talent in drawing and oratory skills. This recognition was aimed at encouraging and celebrating the talents of young girls, highlighting their potential beyond traditional academic achievements. By awarding them for their creativity and communication abilities, Dr. Ravi emphasized the importance of nurturing diverse skills that can help empower girls and improve their future prospects. The cash awards served as both a reward and an incentive for further growth.

Conclusion and Reflection

Upholding the rights of girl children cannot be achieved in isolation; it requires collective effort and commitment. Every girl child has an inherent right to be born, to grow and develop, to be protected from abuse, and to actively participate in decision-making processes. These are not merely aspirations, but fundamental rights that all girls deserve. The International Day of the Girl Child is far more than just another date on the calendar - it serves as a crucial reminder for both reflection and action. It calls on society to recognize the urgent need to protect and empower girls, ensuring they are given equal opportunities to thrive. While governments play a key role, each citizen, too, must internalize their personal responsibility in advocating for and safeguarding the rights of girls. This day compels us all to reflect on our collective duties and to take concrete steps toward making a positive impact in the lives of every girl child. It is a call for us to act now, with urgency and compassion, to build a future where every girl can realize her full potential.

Documented by

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Mr. A. John Aruldass, Partner-in-Mission of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.



PHOTOGRAPHS

DAY 1 - 10th October 2024

International Day of the Girl Child



Mrs. Shaik Imambi, Supervisor of Integrated Child Development services (ICDS) lights the lamp as a sign of beginning and worship on the event of the International Day of the Girl Child 2024



Father. Bhaskar, Director of Pallotti Junior College, Amaravathi, Sr. Vinnarasi, Director of Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravathi, Sr. Gracy, Subsite Director of CHALICE Educational and Community Sponsorship Program, Sr. Arogya Mary, Teacher, St. Augustine English Medium School, Amaravathi, and a Shaik. Shahini, student of Good Shepherd Computer and Spoken English Course join the lighting of lamp



Adolescent Girls Studying at 'Good Shepherd Computer and Spoken English Course' perform a song on "Girls' Vision for the Future"



Adolescent Girls Studying at 'Good Shepherd Computer and Spoken English Course' perform a song on the 'Untold Sufferings of Girl Children' on the title "PILLALU JINDABAD – ADAPILLALU JINDABAD"



"We are with you to stop child marriages" says Mrs. Shaik Imambi, Supervisor of Integrated Child Development services (ICDS), Amaravathi



"It is our duty to educate and empower our girl children" says Fr. Bhaskar, Director of Pallotti Junior College, Amaravathi.



Mrs. Bharathi, Supervisor of Integrated Child Development services (ICDS), Tadikonda says that “Girl children are the gifts from the God; Girl children are precious, so we must protect them”



Adolescent Girls Studying at ‘Good Shepherd Computer and Spoken English Course’ and Women from Amaravathi, Pedakurapadu, and Krosur Mandals (Regions), participate in the celebration of International Day of the Girl Child



Ms. Shaik Shahini, a Student Studying at 'Good Shepherd Computer and Spoken English Course' gives a speech on the importance of the International Day of the Girl Child



"Children must make use of the trust and freedom accorded to them by parents for their better future and self-development" says Sr. Arogya Mary, Teacher working at St. Augustine English Medium School, Amaravathi.



Ms. Gunturu Trisha, on successful completion of Computer and Spoken English Course, receives certificate from Fr. Bhaskar, Director of Pallotti Junior College, Amaravathi.



Adolescent girls who have completed their Computer and Spoken English Course at 'Good Shepherd Computer and Spoken English Course', receive their certificates.



“Girl children must feel proud of themselves; society must develop a positive culture towards girl children, as they are going to be the creators of the future generations” says Sr. Vinnarasi, Director of Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravathi.



“I am in front of you today because of the changes that came in my daughter's life after joining the Computer and Spoken English Course at Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravathi” says Mr. Shaik. Mastan, father of a adolescent girl.



All the Good Shepherd Sisters in Amaravathi were honored by the student of Computer and Spoken English Course, with shawl on the occasion of the celebration of the International Day of the Girl Child



The guests who attended the program and the adolescent girls all chanted slogans together by raising their hands and placards in support of rights of girl children.

DAY 2 - 11th October 2024

International Day of the Girl Child 2024



"GOs and NGOs are together fighting against Child Marriages but still Child Marriages are taking place in our society, but we commit to create a child marriage-free society," says Sr. Vinnarasi, Director of Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravathi.



"Education is the one and the only weapon to develop a girl" says Mr. Vinayakam, District Revenue Officer, Narasaraopet, during the celebrations on International Girl Child Day.



“As a girl child, make the right decision for your better future” says Mr. Ravi, District Medical and Health Officer, Narasaraopet.



“Parents should educate their children for better world for themselves and for others” says, Ms. Revathi, Girl Child Development Officer (Sarva Siksha Abhiyaan)



Government Officials from Palnadu District felicitated Sr. Vinnarasi with a shawl and memento for her services in Palnadu District, Andhra Pradesh



Mr. Vinayakam, District Revenue Officer, Narasaraopet, and Sr. Vinnarasi, Director of Good Shepherd Convent, Amaravathi present a memento to adolescent girls for an Essay Writing on the occasion of the International Day of Girl Child.



Adolescent Girls are felicitated for winning various competitions conducted during the celebrations on the International Day of Girl Child, 11th October 2024.



International Day of Girl Child - A Day for Reflection & Action
Thanks to All Partners

