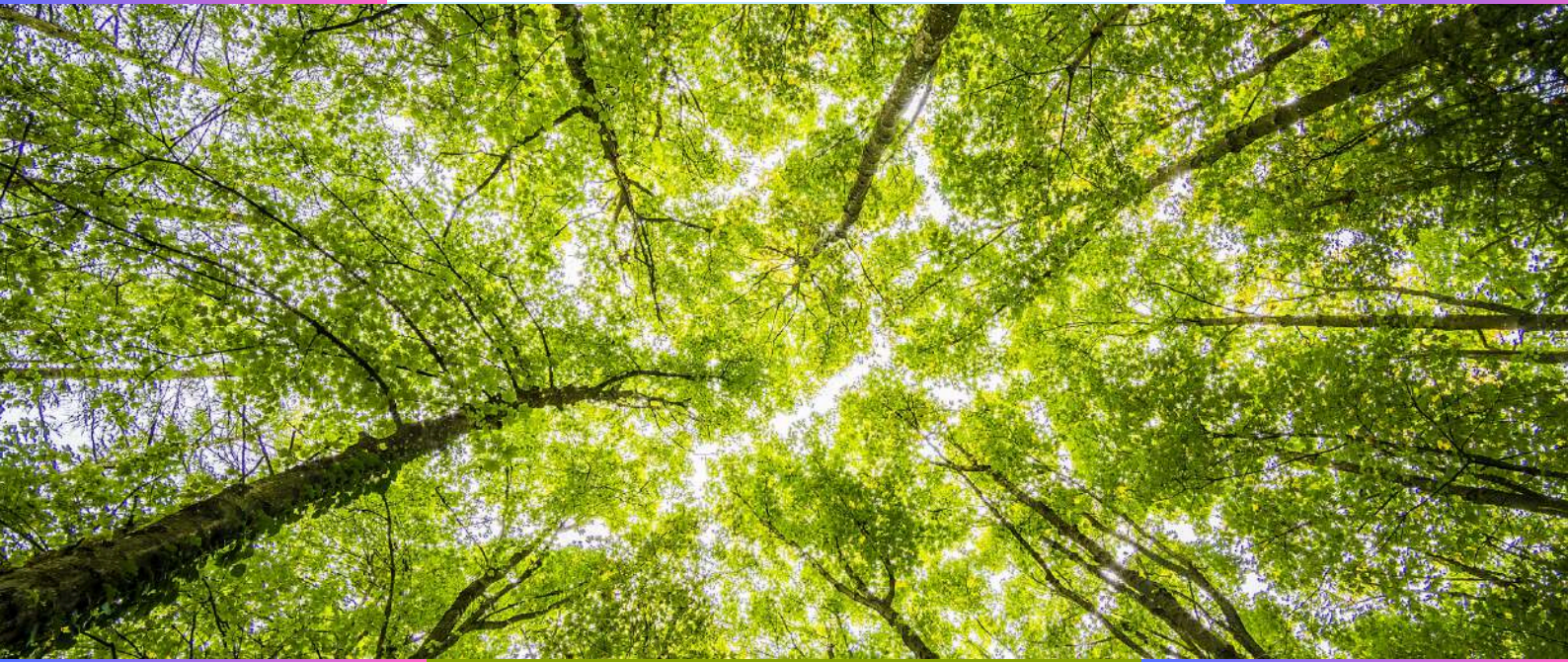




MISSION CONNECT



Central East India Nepal Province



CONGREGATION OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

TOP STORIES

-  Celebrating a Century of Compassion
-  Training on Mushrooms Cultivation
-  Organic Farming- Need of the hour
-  Reigniting Dreams: The path back to Education
-  Training on the formation of Cooperative Society- Balaghat site
-  Accelerate Action- International Women’s Day celebration
-  Local village assemblies, a powerful platform for advocacy- Mulakalapalli Site
-  Celebration of Colours: With Motivation Centre Children by Goa site

TOP STORIES

-  Joint efforts bear fruits - Chainpur site
-  Training for Adolescents- Chalice Mangalagiri Site
-  Spreading Smiles and Learning Through Experience
-  Annual Day Celebration at Good Shepherd Centenary School- ICSE Section
-  Inauguration of Vocational Training Center - Pokhara, Nepal
-  Voice from children parliament
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-  Staff Corner
-  Up coming event

FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD



MISSION CONNECT is connecting purpose with impact. Our MISSION is the guiding force behind every story we tell, every issue we publish, and every voice we raise. Our MISSION is more than just words; it is the foundation of everything we do. We are driven by a commitment towards advocating for social change and we channel this passion into every story we tell, and every initiative we undertake.

We believe that a meaningful change starts with awareness. By shining a light on important issues, giving a platform to diverse perspectives, we transform our mission into tangible force for progress. Whether it's uncovering untold stories, providing a space for dialogue, or fostering critical thinking, our MISSION is a testament to our unwavering dedication towards our core community.

As we continue to journey, through this third issue of Mission Connect, we affirm our commitment towards our mission bringing out the untold stories from our mission fields, where the mission is a living reality. Thank you for being part of MISSION CONNECT. We are grateful for your contribution and commitment in sending the news and untold stories of many young girls and boys. We look forward for your valuable suggestions. Have a happy reading.

Srs. Kala, Julia and Neticia

HARVEST FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Celebrating a Century of Compassion



On February 15, 2025, the Good Shepherd Convent, Chennai, commemorated its 100-years journey of compassionate service since its inception in 1924. A special alumni gathering was held for former residents of Marian Home and Mottukal and their families.

The Chennai-based Good Shepherd Sisters

hosted the event, which drew nearly 200 girls, women, sisters (past and present), and staff who played a part in the homes' growth. Members of the Good Shepherd Community and faculty from the Good Shepherd School also joined in, collectively celebrating a legacy rooted in love and care.

A Joyous Homecoming

Chief guest Mrs. Shobana Thomas, an alumna and Assistant Secretary of the Children's Home of Hope, was joined by guest of honour Sr. Pushpa Louis, Provincial Leader of CEIN. Distinguished guests included Mr. Rajakumar, Chairperson of the CWC South Chennai, Mr. Karunakaran, SI of Nungambakkam Police Station, and Mr. Kandasami, Auditor.

Cultural performances, a documentary, and a debate show formed the day's highlights. The documentary touched the hearts, bringing shared memories alive and honouring the enduring spirit of the Good Shepherd family.



Continuing the Mission of Love and Upliftment

Guided by St. Mary Euphrasia's belief that "One person is more precious than the whole world," the sisters have empowered women and girls for decades. 'Marian Home' provided shelter and training for homeless women, school dropouts, and trauma survivors, helping them rebuild their lives.

'Mottukal' furthers this mission by offering care and education to vulnerable girls, many of whom pursue higher studies or rejoined their families. It now facilitates also community development programs across Chennai. The centenary celebration was both a remembrance and a reaffirmation of the sisters' unwavering mission to uplift and transform lives.

Training on Mushrooms Cultivation

The Economic Justice Project at Salem organised a 10 days training on Mushroom Cultivation from 2nd to 22nd January 2025 for SHG women who are landless labourers at Sukampatti village, Salem District, Tamil Nadu. There were 25 (12 EJ and 13 non EJ) women who attended the training. The resource persons were experts in this field and trained the women on different techniques of mushroom production in context to cultivation techniques, preparation of spawn, substrates preparation, marketing of fresh product, preservation and value addition, etc.



The participants acquired knowledge on types of mushrooms, preservation techniques and importance of casing. They were also taken to exposure to eye witness the mushroom cultivation, which increased the knowledge on the various components of mushroom production. This training brought a lot of interest among the women to learn something new and start a business. The whole training was sponsored by the Bank of India, Ayodiyapattanam. The Salem staff and team express their gratitude to Bank of India for their kind gesture.



Organic Farming- Need of the hour



Agriculture is one of the primary sources of livelihood and at the same time one of the contributors to climate change in modern era, affecting the land, atmosphere, soil and water. The Good Shepherd Sisters from Garratola, Madhya Pradesh, under the Economic Justice project, organized a two days training for 110 farmers on 11th & 18th February 2025.

The resource person Mrs. Khemeshwari Dhurwey, Agricultural Development Officer from Birsa, explained on Organic Farming and Soil Health with the examples.

Explaining the benefits, she emphasized that organic farming is the best and the most viable alternative to traditional farming techniques and has high nutritional value in comparison to conventional produce. It helps in reducing soil pollution and air pollution. She stressed that the use of harmful chemical fertilizers and pesticides poison our food cycle.



Explaining the advantages and disadvantages of organic farming, she imparted her knowledge on how to prepare bio fertilizer, demonstrated practically soil test, and invigorated the participants to prepare the fertilizers at home instead of buying. The sessions were interactive as the farmers raised a lot of queries and clarified their doubts. They entreated the officer to support them in this venture and she assured them her whole hearted support.



Reigniting Dreams: The path back to Education

Three children named Palavi Barku Pawar, Joshana Navanth Waghmare, and Suraj Ramdas Pawar belong to indigenous group from a small village, Tamnath, in Karjat, had been forced to leave their formal education while they were studying in 6th grade due to various challenges. Palavi and Suraj, had to quit the school to take care of their siblings and do the household work, while their parents were labours in a brick kiln. Joshana, a bright young girl, struggled due to financial problems as her parents were not able to support her educational expenses.

Nevertheless, their life took a positive turn, thanks to the intervention of the Children's Parliament and our Good Shepherd staff Anjana. Palavi, Joshana and Suraj, along with many others, had the opportunity to share their personal stories during a Children's Parliament meeting in their village. Through their discussions, it became clear that the Children's Parliament need to support these children to fulfil their dreams.

Leaders of the Children's Parliament along with Good Shepherd Sister Rosita and the project Staff met the school authorities and requested them to take these children back to school. All the teachers were happy to re-admit these children back to the formal education. Good Shepherd Sisters supported with educational material. These children are now excelling in their studies. Their success became a symbol of hope for other children in Tamnath village, proving that significant change is possible, when children are given a platform to speak up on their issues.



Training on the formation of Cooperative Society- Balaghat site



The EJ project team in Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh organized a one-day training session on formation of cooperative society, which was attended by 43 women. Mr. Manak Tekam, the staff and two board members from the cooperative society at Garratola were the resource persons as they have been successfully running the cooperative society from 2018.

The resource persons explained the benefits of cooperative society registration for Self-Help Group (SHG) members, emphasizing its vital role in empowering communities and promoting economic self-sufficiency. He provided valuable insights into the concept and advantages of a cooperative society. He also outlined the cooperative society registration process, which is done at the Cooperative Society Office in Balaghat.

The board members shared their insights and experiences as leaders of the cooperative society. They highlighted success stories and the remarkable achievements of women in Garratola, showcasing the positive impact of cooperative society in empowering women. The participants gained a clear understanding of the steps involved in cooperative society registration, the importance of bylaws, and the process of forming a committee.

Accelerate Action- International Women's Day celebration



International Women's Day was observed by Nagpur Ecumenical Christian Women's Movement in Nagpur on 9th March 2025 with the joint efforts of various NGOs like Archdiocesan Women's Commission, Indian Christian Women's Movement, CNÍ Social Service Institute, Sisters of the Good Shepherd, NMSSS, Jeevandhara Society and Catholic Information Centre. Many eminent speakers were invited to enthuse the women by their motivational speeches centered on the theme Accelerate Action – to quicken the pace of progress for women's rights and to take decisive action to make meaningful changes that positively impact a goal.

Mrs. Prerana Kale (PL of Kalamna Police Station) motivated the women by her powerful speech. Arch Bishop of Nagpur Rev. Elias Gonsalves focused his message on movement. Movements play a crucial role in the society by acting as catalysts for social change, challenging existing power structures, and advocating for the rights and needs of marginalized groups, ultimately shaping a more just and equitable society. A poignant skit by the domestic helps conveyed powerful message of supporting women who experience abuse like acid attack and sexual assault.





This celebration not only became successful but a moment of unity for more than 600 women of various faiths who came together in solidarity and transcended all the differences of caste, class and religion.

"My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together."

- Desmond Tutu

Local village assemblies, a powerful platform for advocacy- Mulakalapalli Site



The local assemblies provide an opportunity for direct participation and engagement of the villagers in the decision-making process. These meetings play a crucial role in promoting transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in rural governance among village people.

With the encouragement and support of the Good Shepherd Sisters and partners in mission at Mulakalapally, Telangana Dist positive changes are gradually taking shape among the women in the villages. These women are boldly coming forward to address critical local issues by actively engaging with government officials. They are not just participants; they are becoming influential voices in village assemblies, known as gram sabhas, held at the Panchayat level.

January 21st to 24th 2025, Prajapalana (special) Gramasabhas (local assemblies) were conducted by Government of Telangana across the state. During this Gramasabhas 300 SHG members participated from the cooperative society Mahila Rythula MACS Ltd. 250 members applied for new ration cards and various other schemes. The government is currently reviewing the applications and will finalize the selection of beneficiaries.



Celebration of Colours: With Motivation Centre Children by Goa site

Holi, a vibrant spring festival celebrated across India, signifies the triumph of good over evil, rebirth, and joy. People celebrate by throwing color and water at each other, symbolizing the joy and vibrancy of spring and the unity of all people.

On 13th March, 2025, the CP Project team celebrated the festival of colours with 80 motivational center children in Belatimb, Goa. The day was marked with songs, dance, games, sharing of food and painting the space with colors. Sr. Mahalakshmi addressed the children on the importance of Holi and the reason to celebrate. She said that, “Holi is the festival which marks the season of hope and a new beginning”.



The celebration was marked with wishing one another with colours which brought great joy among the children. All had different colours and water balloons which were aimed at each other. The children expressed that, “we are so happy to celebrate Holi with Sisters, staffs and teachers like one family”. The joy and smile on children’s faces brought satisfaction to the celebration.

Joint efforts bear fruits - Chainpur site

105 women from three EJ project villages namely Tilwari, Dahudargaon and Jaipur from Chainpur Block, had submitted applications to the local president during the gram saba meeting in 2024 requesting water facility for the irrigation.

Through the initiative of EJ project staff, along with the SHG leaders, EJ women submitted the application to repair and deepen the dam, so that the water could be utilized for irrigation. On 10th October 2024, the work started and on 3rd March 2025 they completed the repair work and deepening of it and gave connection to the fields. At present there is a constant flow of water. The people of three villages are happy to use this water for the cultivation.

The agricultural community purely dependent on the monsoon and can cultivate only one crop during the rainy season and rest of the year the fields are empty. There is a dam close to these villages, but water has not been used for the agriculture as there is no way to bring the water to the fields.



Training for Adolescents- Chalice Mangalagiri Site



GSG Mangalagiri organized adolescent collectives training program at Good Shepherd Convent, Mangalagiri on 23rd March 2025. Total 107 adolescents participated in this training. Resource Person Mrs. P. Sravanthi a counselor from Child & Women Department Guntur took session on Mental Health. She started the session with pre-test. The participants were able to answer.

Most of them struggle in their families, neighborhood, schools and Colleges.

Today's adolescents are very anxious about their studies, exploring new things, addicted to social media and substance abuses. They are faced with a lot of stress from the schools, colleges, families, friends and lack healthy coping mechanisms which lead them to harbor suicidal tendencies.

This happens due to lack of parental and good peer support. The resource person explained in detail on emotional age, cognitive function, and behavioral changes, social and relational behavior and support systems available. The session equipped the participants with certain learnings for their life like; spending sufficient time with families, take decisions in consultation with the elders specially when confused, avoid being addicted to social media, substance abuse and harming oneself, do exercise and have a good sleep.

Spreading Smiles and Learning Through Experience

At Good Shepherd Convent School, Karjat, education goes beyond textbooks and classrooms. True learning happens when students step into the real world, interact with different communities, and develop a deep sense of compassion, responsibility, and gratitude. The school children had exposure program to one village and two old age homes.

A Day of Giving and Learning at Tamnathwadi Village



Children were taken to Tamnathwadi village by Sr. Resi the Manager, Sr. Amala the Headmistress and class teachers, and a social worker.

The visit facilitated to realise the hardships faced by the people, including limited water resources and the prevalence of child labour due to financial constraints.

Spreading Love and Joy at Old Age Homes



A few days later, students had another heart-warming experience, a visit to Happy Flock Old Age Home and Jeevan Jyoti Old Age Care Home. The elderly residents were thrilled to interact with the students, sharing stories of their past, wisdom, and experiences. This deeply touched the students, making them realize how much the elderly cherish love, care, and attention.

To make their visit more special, the students presented a cultural program.

The atmosphere was filled with joy and laughter, as the elderly clapped and sang along, cherishing every moment.

Both the visits were more than just educational trip, they were transformative life lessons. The students returned with a renewed sense of empathy and responsibility, understanding that happiness lies in giving, sharing, and caring.

Annual Day Celebration at Good Shepherd Centenary School- ICSE Section

The much-awaited Annual Day celebration commenced on 14th Feb 2025 with a warm welcome to our esteemed guests, followed by a prayer and the traditional lighting of the lamp. The school community, students, and parents eagerly gathered to witness the vibrant performances of our little angels from all classes.

The students captivated the audience with their enchanting dances, inspiring speeches, engaging dramas, a passionate fashion show, and an impressive army performance.



The highlight of the celebration was the school report, which filled the auditorium with excitement and joy, leaving everyone spellbound.



Adding to the festivity, students were honoured with certificates in recognition of their academic excellence, cultural achievements, and outstanding performances. The Chief Guest Ms. Shruti Karthik and the Guest of Honour Mr. Jairaj Rao delivered heartfelt speeches, commending the young talents and appreciating the dedication of the teaching faculty for their exemplary guidance and nurturing approach.

And our Correspondent Sr. Aruna George and Principal Sr. Annie Thomas also gave powerful and reflective messages. The celebration concluded on a joyous note as the UKG students graduated, marking their transition to Grade I in the upcoming academic year. The entire event was a grand success, leaving behind cherished memories filled with happiness and pride.



Inauguration of Vocational Training Center – Pokhara, Nepal



"Every purpose under heaven has its time." This was reflected on 23 March 2025, when the Vocational Training Center, Pokhara was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Silas, the Apostolic Administrator of the Nepal vicariate. The training hall was inaugurated by Sr. Rachel and Sisters.

The stone was unveiled by Paul and Odile, the benefactors who generously supported the renovation and operation of the center in loving memory of their son and daughter-in-law, who tragically lost their lives in the 2015 earthquake in Kathmandu, Nepal.




The thanks giving Eucharistic celebration marked this occasion with 125 people witnessed this great event. OVN remains steadfast in its mission to prevent human trafficking, educate vulnerable Nepali girls, and advocate for their rights. "We believe that education and empowerment are the key strategies to drive change," stated Sr. Anthonia (OVN Director).

OVN has been widely recognized for its life-saving initiatives. In 2018, OVN's Child Protection Home faced financial challenges. At that time, Paul and Odile were searching for an NGO dedicated to supporting vulnerable children. They visited several organizations but were not convinced. Finally, through the recommendation of Fr. Roy SJ, they came to OVN and were deeply moved by Good Shepherd Sister's service, as the organisation shares the similar objectives as of Donors.

Since 2019, the Children's Home has undergone significant transformations, including the renovation of cottages and the construction of a new staff residence. Today, OVN reaches another milestone, the launch of the Vocational Training Center. This center aims to provide training for 70 individuals in computer skills, 20 in tailoring, and 10 in beauty parlor skills per year. We hope that every child and young girl graduating from this center will carry forward the values, apply their skills, and achieve economic independence.

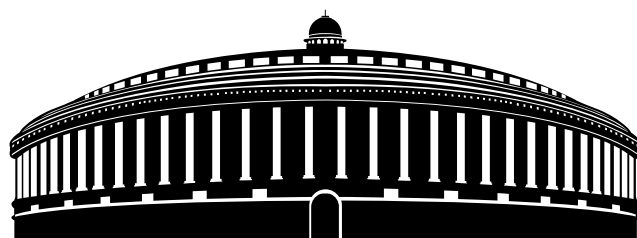


VOICES FROM CHILDREN'S PARLIAMENT



I am Rakhi Pandhre, a student of Class 9th and a member of the Kamal Children's Parliament, Sonpuri village, Balaghat. Our Children's Parliament has 31 members. We eagerly look forward to attending our regular monthly meetings, where every member actively participates. On February 28th, we celebrated National Science Day. Our Children's Parliament group went on an exhibition trip to Science Museum and Children's Park in Balaghat District.

The museum manager provided us with detailed explanations about the exhibits, making the visit both educational and engaging. It was my first experience travelling with friends to explore and learn more about Balaghat city. We feel fortunate to be part of the Children's parliament which offers us valuable opportunities to expand our knowledge, appreciate ourselves and others, attend school regularly, and study well.



Children Parliament is a platform to connect with one another

I am S. Kanisha Shree, studying in 5th grade from Karumapuram village, Salem District, Tamil Nadu. I am the Prime Minister of Bharadhiyar Children's parliament and we are 25 members in our group. We have regular meetings and I personally have improved a lot in my behavior which has been expressed by others and myself feel that I have become a powerful speaker in my school too.

Many of the children have become well disciplined. I have learnt through this parliament meeting to study about own village, the issues which are existing, and whom to approach to find solutions. I am grateful to our Parliament, where we connect, share experiences, and learn from one another.

VOICES FROM ADOLESCENT GIRLS

The most significant change in my life Says N.Y.Triveni



I am N.Y. Triveni, from Amaravathi, Palnadu Dist, Andhra Pradesh. After completing my B.Com. Graduation, I found myself in a difficult and uncertain situation, with no specific occupational skills to pursue a stable career. Faced with this challenge, I began accompanying my mother to work as an agricultural daily wage labourer. On a good month, I would barely earn around Rs. 1,000 a sum that was insufficient to provide any kind of financial stability.

Given our severe financial limitations, the prospect of continuing my education through higher studies was simply out of reach. With no other options available to me, I was forced to accept the reality of continuing with the hard, physically demanding work in the fields.

Nearly a year later, feeling I had no other options, I discovered the Computer and Spoken English Course offered by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, free for girls like me. With determination, I enrolled in the course and attended every session regularly. I recognized these skills were essential for personal growth and creating employment opportunities.

Thanks to the computer application skills I acquired, I have been fortunate enough to secure a contract-based position as a Data Entry Operator at the Mandal Development Office (MDO) in Amaravathi.

I receive a monthly salary of Rs. 18,000 which is helping me cover my family's expenses and contribute to our household needs.

This has not only improved my financial situation but also earned me a newfound respect within my family and community.

I desire that girls should be courageous – Sanskruti - Karjat site

I am Sanskruti Sanjay Hiram, hailing from Koshane village, Karjat Maharashtra and I am a member of Apeksha adolescent girl's group, studying in 8th grade. Growing up in a village, life isn't always easy, but it taught me something that city kids might not understand on hard work and patience.

From helping my parents in the fields to carrying water from the river, I learned that every small task is part of achieving something bigger. It isn't always glamorous, but it is real.

As I joined the adolescent girl's group, my life style has changed. The input session which I receive, give a new look to my life. I am a girl who love to help others in need and I gained the knowledge and courage even to meet the officials to get our rights. I take the responsibility to organize programmes in the school. I am proud to be member of this group and look forward for many things to learn. I want to bring opportunities here for my friends so that they too may become like me courageous and hard working.

STAFF CORNER

Capacity building training for staff



A two days' workshop on Baseline study and PRA/PLA was organised on 26th & 27th March 2025, for all the staff who are involved in social development work in CEI.

There were 39 staff from various projects. The training was conducted by the MDO Team specially Mr. Peter, the MDO manager skilfully facilitated the two days session.
