

DON BOSCO ASHALAYAM

*Journeying with children from the margins
to the mainstream.*



NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 24, VOL. 4, October - December 2024

**Education to Life Skills - slums
and streets.**



- ☒ Academics & Skill Trainings
- ☒ Children Programmes
- ☒ Events



DIRECTORS MESSAGE

Dear Friends Don Bosco Ashalayam,

As we end another year, our thoughts are on the countless occasions of joy, growth, and progress of children that marked 2024. This last quarter has been very eventful, and we are happy to share some of the highlights in this newsletter.

Educational Achievements

The end of the academic term brought with it good results as our children moved up to the next classes, which marks their hard work and determination. Congratulations to all the children for their achievements, and we encourage them to keep striving for excellence in the coming year.

Festive Celebrations

The last quarter of the year had the festive spirits with many celebrations:

- Durga Puja and Diwali: Many children celebrated these festivals with their relatives and others, visiting colorful pandals, enjoying sweets, and participating in cultural programs.
- Christmas: The Christmas celebrations at Ashalayam were filled with warmth and love. The children decorated the hostels, sang carols, and shared gifts. Special thanks to our donors and volunteers who made the season magical for the children.
- New Year's Eve: We ended the year in every hostel with a gathering, reflecting on the blessings of 2024 and looking forward to 2025 with hope and renewed energy.

Gratitude and New Beginnings

As we step into 2025, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported our mission throughout 2024. Your generosity and care have enabled us to provide shelter, education, and opportunities to countless children.

We wish each of you a New Year filled with joy, health, and success.

Warm regards,

Fr. Dr. George Chempakathinal, SDB
Director, Don Bosco Ashalayam



Green Energy Promotion

Thanks to Ms. Anjali Rambaud Méasson, partner Innovation Energy Development (IED), for helping Ashalayam to set up photovoltaic panels in its main centre in Howrah. The savings will be used to extend the various activities in the streets and slums



New volunteer

Ashalayam welcomes Yannis Debay new volunteer from France, he will be participating in the creation of educational tools, helping to develop international outlook and possibilities for children and encouraging cooperation and solidarity between all children.

The Apna Bazaar 2024

Many thanks to Leo Club of Kolkata Greater for organizing this wonderful event.

Apna Bazaar is not just a Christmas market: Every child of Ashalayam enjoyed every moment of the programme. They received Rs. 5000/- in counterfeit to spend on clothes, toys, sports equipment, sweets and more.



Asha Nayan hostel, Kolkata

The boys expressed their creativity, transforming the hostel walls into vibrant masterpieces. With brushes in hand and colors in their hearts, they brought new life to their living space. This colorful walls showcase their artistic skills and reflects their enthusiasm and energy. Kudos to our young artists for making their hostel a brighter and more beautiful place!

SALESIANS SOCIAL COMMITMENT



INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON COMBATING MARGINALIZATION OF CHILDREN

Two-days international workshop on combating marginalization of children was held at Don Bosco Nitika from 21 to 22 November 2024. Don Bosco Ashalayam staff with the Young at Risk members of the province of Kolkata organized the programme to sensitize people on the need to work for children living in difficult situation with many challenges.

It was to empower the staff to face challenges such as urban/rural poverty, broken families, migration, and substance abuse that marginalize children. With growing social and technological disparities, there's a need to re-think and adapt strategies for the 21st century.

As the Kolkata province is celebrating its centenary, it was an opportunity to have look at the various activities for the poor in its 40 centres in India, Nepal and Bangladesh. It was able to bring together Salesians and laypeople to explore new ways to support the poorest youth, inspired by Don Bosco's legacy.

Fr. Dr. George Chempakathinal, SDB
Director, Don Bosco Ashalayam

TEAM KINDIA VISIT TO ASHALAYAM



Spreading joy at Don Bosco Ashalayam! KINDIA Team's visit on 30 Oct 2024, was an opportunity to share laughter, T-shirts, and snacks with the children. Thank you, KINDIA, for making the day special!



A Memorable Day

Our young people have discovered new horizons through unique workshops on 18 Dec 2024.

Thanks to Kolkata Centre for Creativity (KCC) and Ecoavid School of Ethical Design Studies (ESEDS) for this day of exchange and creativity!

Western Classical Music concert

It was a joy to attend the Western Classical Music Concert! We are grateful to Mr. Didier Talpain and Mr. Nicolas Facino, Director of Alliance Française du Bengale, for their support and encouragement. Their efforts in promoting cultural exchange mean so much to us. Thank you for including us in such a wonderful event.



New education centre on 29 November 2024

As the survey is progressing the need is identified for more schools. A second school is opened in Shalimar on November 29th! This can take of basic education to a group of 40 children.



IT New Initiative

We appreciate the visit of the Consul General of France in Kolkata, M. Didier Talpain, for his visit and the official inauguration of the new computer centre in Bakherhat centre of Ashalayam!



The digital revolution is a source of progress, but also growing inequality. In India, access to education remains a major challenge, although it tends to shrink over time. The Pernod Ricard India Foundation is taking the lead in helping Ashalayam to reduce the gap or the inequality

youth develop essential digital skills. Today, they can learn to master office tools and graphic design software, opening a new "digital window" to their future.

Regional Migrant Ministry Meet

On 28 November, Fr. George and Mr. Rintu from Ashalayam, attended the meeting. Fr. Francis Bosco SDB, National coordinator, Bishop Victor Thakur, Raipur, Bishop Albert, Diburgarh, Member commission for CCBI, Fr. Jaison and others attended the meeting on of migrants. The Chief Guest was Sr. Allesandra FMA from the Dicastery of Integral Human development, Rome. Sister, talked about the dicastery that promotes human integral development, justice and peace. Migration is a serious issue; it is a challenge to help them who belong to the weaker sections of the society.



Frederic Uncle's visit - 07 December



Annual Sports - street/slum centers



Pilkhana



Sijberia



Uluberia



Baidyabati



Tikiapara



Shalimar



Dasnagar



Jagannathpur



Premchand



Bahir Gangarampur



Chengail



Tikiapara Bypass

Don Bosco Ashalayam organized its Annual Sports Meet, providing a platform for marginalized children and youth to showcase their sporting talents. The events aimed to promote physical fitness, teamwork, and sportsmanship among the participants.

Don Bosco Ashalayam creates a supportive environment that allows marginalized children and youth to overcome socio-economic barriers, develop their full potential, and become active, responsible, and empowered members of their communities.



A Friend brings joy to Asha Nayan

Mr. Felix Augustine visited Asha Nayan hostel, bringing warmth and joy to the children during the winter season. He distributed blankets and food packets to the children. The children were happy with the thoughtful gifts. Such friends of Ashalayam continue to make a meaningful difference to children.

TEACHER'S TRAINING PROGRAMME ON WELBEING

On September 13, 2024, a Teacher's Training Programme on Wellbeing was conducted, aiming to equip educators with the skills and knowledge necessary to support the emotional and mental wellbeing of their students. The programme focused on promoting holistic wellbeing, addressing the complexities of modern teaching, and providing practical strategies for creating a supportive learning environment. Through interactive sessions and expert-led discussions, participants gained a deeper understanding of wellbeing principles and developed effective techniques to foster resilience, self-awareness, and positive relationships among students, ultimately enhancing their overall educational experience.



SYM FEST 2024

From 29th December to 1st January, seven children had the honor to participate in SYM FEST at Don Bosco, Tirupattur, Tamil Nadu. Our team enthusiastically participated in inspiring lectures, cultural competitions, a Christmas Cantata, a walk for peace and unity, and much more. Many thanks to all the organizers and participants for making this event memorable.



CERTIFICATION OF BEAUTICIAN COURSE

Don Bosco Ashalayam recently awarded certificates to a new batch of young women and girls on 18 Nov 2024 who successfully completed their Beautician course. The training program, designed to empower women to become self-employed, equipped the students with essential skills in beauty therapy,

makeup, and skincare. The organization extends its heartfelt gratitude to Guy Bedard and Prity Bhattacharyya for their invaluable support in making this Beautician course a success."

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY



Children from the street centres, celebrated Human Rights Day with great enthusiasm, expressing their skills through an impressive display of handmade crafts. The event highlighted the creativity and talent of these young individuals, emphasizing their right to education, self-expression, and equality.

Smiles and solidarity

On Sunday 01 Dec our Ashalayam youth met with those from Life Project 4 Youth - LP4Y to share an unforgettable day of mutual support and hope. LP4Y is an NGO that accompanies young adults with a 6-month training to give them all the keys to succeed in the job market. Their mission? Turning dreams into beautiful achievements!

Many thanks to everyone for this beautiful day, rich in meetings and sharing. We can't wait to see you again for the second leg!





A new vocational training is initiated in Sewing at Asha Anand's hostel on 24 Nov located at Pilkhana in the City of Joy! Thanks to the support of The United Nations Women's Guild of Geneva. The centre is equipped with Professional sewing machines, Aesthetic chairs, Carts and complete equipment, Sewing tools and professional supplies. This training is much more than just learning; it is a real stepping stone towards financial independence for these young women, a decisive step towards their self-reliance. A huge thank you to Catherine Boland for her support and follow-up on Ashalayam projects. Your commitment transforms lives!

Congratulations Tapasi!

Tapasi, a former child of Don Bosco Ashalayam is wished the very best as she begins a new life with her life partner. She is full time nurse working in a government hospital in Kolkata. The uncles and aunties from France, who supported were by her side on this momentous day.



Children with games!

It is a joy to see children enjoying on the field! On a regular basis, they meet to play a multitude of sports, ranging from badminton to basketball, volleyball, football, rugby, swimming and even kabaddi. Each activity is an opportunity to gather, have fun and develop skills while creating unforgettable memories.



United Nations Women's Circle of Geneva:

Children of Ashalayam feel lucky as they are gifted with many items for their training and leisure time. They are gifted cycles to go to schools. Children are grateful and appreciative of their concern for them.

JOY AT CHRISTMAS



Christmas celebration was vibrant, joyful and brought in lots of enthusiasm, to the children. The festivities commenced with a Christmas prayer session, where the children actively participated and experienced God's powerful presence in their life.

The celebrations continued with exciting games, quizzes, and fun-filled activities, which the children eagerly participated in. To add joy everyone was given gifts for the occasion; carefully chosen to bring a smile to their faces.

As the children unwrapped their gifts, the atmosphere was filled with the real Christmas feeling. It was an opportunity for the children to come together, celebrate, and experience the true spirit of Christmas – a time for love, kindness, and generosity.

Through this joyful celebration, Don Bosco Ashalayam reaffirmed its commitment to providing a loving and supportive environment to marginalized children, helping them to feel nice, heard, and valued.

PAST PUPILS' DAY



Don Bosco Ashalayam had the annual Pupil's Day program on the last Sunday of the year. It was a happy time that brought back old memories and made everyone feel together. The day started with the Christmas prayer sitting around the crib. There was time for songs and dances. The children of the hostels entertained them. The past pupils were felicitated, and all enjoyed the sumptuous meal. Each of them expressed thanks and made their contributions for the day.

The Past Pupil's Day program was a wonderful way for DBA to reconnect with its past students and celebrate the true spirit of Christmas.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



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PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY

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