

DON BOSCO Ashalayam

158/18, Belilious Road, Howrah

**Newsletter
November 2019**

Director's Message

Dear Friends,

Wishing you all a belated Happy Diwali. With abundance of health, wealth and happiness. Ashalayam children celebrated the festival of lights on 27 October and we remembered you in our prayers.

I'm happy to present an overview of the events during the last couple of months. Some new initiatives have been launched to connect with hard to reach underprivileged children. as most of the children are in the out of school or never been to school categories, our objective is to provide them a platform for integrating them into the formal school system through bridge course schools. The older children in the 16-18 age group shall be offered the opportunity for skill training in our VTC.

Thank you for supporting our rehabilitation efforts. God Bless YouAll.

*Fr Mathew Parakonath
Director*



Apna Bazar at Howrah Mela

DBA's October Mela was a little different from the regular monthly mela. In addition to the regular mela activities this mela was loaded with lots of fun filled activities. More than **700 children** from DBA's Shelter Homes and Outreach areas in Howrah Station and ASSP centres had a rocking time in the Mela.

Organised on Sunday 19 October, this mela had an array of stalls with delicious snacks and exciting games and competitions were some of the attractions of this Mela.



On the spot dance and singing competitions drew huge response from the children. The highlight of the Mela was the Bazar; a row of stalls stocked with items like clothes, accessories, stationery, sports items were up for sale. All the children were given money coupons buy any stuff they wanted. Instead of being passive recipients of charity they were free to choose and spend on whatever they desired. It was interesting to watch them bargain for the best possible deal. The Mela began early at 09:00 AM and came to a close at 02:00 PM with a delicious lunch for the children and volunteers. This mela helped children showcase their talents and also they learnt to prioritise and spend on what is important.



Life Skills Education for Boys and Girls



Therapy Program for girls was held in Kalyani from 22 to 25 October 2019. The 4 day program included sessions on self awareness, building and sustaining relationships, self care and values. 43 Girls from Class VII, IX and X were drawn from Asha Deepti, Mayer Asha Baltikuri, Asha Arunodaya and Asha Nirmala Homes. At the end of the session each participant summarised their understanding of the session and pledged to substitute atleast two negative habits with positive ones.

Left: Therapy workshop for girls in Kalyani.

Below: Peace workshop in DB Nitika.

A Peace Workshop was organised in Nitika Don Bosco on 29 and 30 October 2019. 48 Boy and Girls mainly from Class X from various DBA Homes participated in the program. The participants learnt how to be assertive and ways to reduce conflict levels in different settings like school, home, public places etc. This Workshop was sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and conducted by Ayesha Khader and Arup Ghosh of the same organisation.



YaR Seminar in Mumbai

Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk (YaR) seminar was held in Mumbai from 18 to 20 September 2019. The theme of the seminar was “Perspective planning for YaR Ministry – Journeying together into tomorrow”. The seminar was presided over by eminent strategy planner who facilitated the strategy planning for the future with feedback from the participating provinces. DBA was represented by Fr. Mathew Parakonath, Alok Chaudhuri and Helene Tiffaine.



Job Placements

3 boys completed Hotel Management Training and were placed in jobs. Rakesh Singh is placed in a 3 star hotel in Kolkata and Sourav Mondal in Mumbai. Chandan Das has been placed in a bakery in Kolkata. Two Nursing students; Mumphy Bhattacharya and Angoora Khatun as part of their nursing course have begun their internship in St. Augustine Hospital Guwahati, Assam.



Clockwise from top left: Chandan Das, Sourav Mondal, Angura Khatun and Mumphy Bhattacharya

Ashalayam Girls Rugby Team

An all girls rugby team has been constituted with 16 girls from various DBA Homes. The girls are having regular practice under guidance of Christophe Plais. The rugby girls are enjoying the sport with quite a few of them are contemplating a career in sports.

Ashalayam Girls Rugby Team.



Tree Planting in Kalyani

Centuries ago Buddha had said that it is the duty of every Indian to plant and care for atleast 5 trees during his or her lifetime. Indeed if were to follow his philosophy then India would be a green and clean country with lots of fresh air and plenty of fruit bearing trees. There would be no shortage of food and the country would be self sufficient.

The need to protect the ecology is essential if we are to ensure a better future for our children. A tree planting ceremony was held in Kalyani on 24 October 2019. The children are aware of the importance of trees in our lives and they made an impassioned plea to shun plastic, reduce consumption and make efforts to plant more trees for a healthier and happy world. The Girls later planted 100 saplings and pledged to care for them.



Getting ready to plant the saplings in Kalyani Campus.

Programs & Events

Teachers Day is celebrated in India on 05 September every year in memory of one of the country's greatest scholar and former President of India Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. In Ashalayam the children put up a cultural program for the teachers and instructors and gave them thank you cards.

On Bhai Dooj or Brother's day, girls anoint the forehead of their brother with vermilion to commemorate the bond between brothers and sister. The sister prepares sweets for the brother and brother's in turn give gifts to sister. As is the custom, Bhai Dooj was observed in Ashalayam on 30 October two days after Diwali.



Above: Teachers Day program.



Right: Celebrating Bhai Dooj in Ashalayam.

Migrant Desk Launched

In keeping with the long term strategic vision of Ashalayam a **Migrant Desk** Project has been launched. Over the last few years there is a sharp increase in the street population as a large number of people are migrating from the rural areas to the cities to escape the grinding poverty caused due to reduction in farm activity and displacement due to natural and manmade disasters. We have observed that a large number of the migrant population do not have a roof over their heads and the children are exposed to harsh and unhealthy conditions. Most children do not go to school and addiction and violence against women and children is a common feature across families. The migrant families do not have identity documents so they are ineligible to vote and therefore their welfare is ignored by the political parties and the administration. They do not have access to healthcare, education, drinking water or any other facility. In a typical migrant family both parents/single parent work as construction labourers, factory helpers or domestic helps. The children are on their own during the time the parent's are away. This exposes them to negative influences like substance abuse, criminal activities, begging etc. Most of them are vulnerable and are easy targets for sexual predators. The aim of the Migrant Desk is to ensure that children are retained within the family and at the same time have the opportunity for education, skill training and access to healthcare. Satabdi Roy a dynamic and experienced staff has been appointed as Migrant Desk Coordinator. We appeal to our sponsors, friends and benefactors to come forward and help us reach out and help the most vulnerable and at risk children.

An Appeal

Ashalayam endeavors to provide all facilities required for the all round healthy development of a child. For this we need you and look to you for support. You can sponsor a child's medical and clothing requirements or nutrition and/or education for one month or a longer period per your convenience.

	Expense Head (For 1 Child)	1 month INR	3 months INR	6 months INR	12 months INR
1	Food & Nutrition	2000	6000	12000	24000
2	Education	900	2700	5400	10800
3	Medical Expenses	For 1 year INR 2000			
4	Clothes, Uniform, shoes	For 1 year INR 3000			

Donors outside India may send their remittances to our bank, details given below;

Account No: 11960100048604
Federal Bank Ltd.
Howrah Branch
IFSC: FDRL0001196

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THANKS TO OUR FRIENDS & BENEFACTORS

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★ Frederic Boisset, France

★ DB Mission Bonn

★ Raja Foundation ,
Netherlands

★ KINDIA Belgium

★ Fr. Andrew & Friends, UK

★ Fondation Anber France

★ SEED, France

★ Rotary Club, Portugate, Spain

★ Terra Indica

★ Erica, Elizabeth & Friends from
Verien Zur for Derung Der
Strassenkinder Germany

★ Angela Jacobi & Friends, Germany

★ Constantine, KAB, Germany

★ Mennonite Central Committee

★ Kirsty Moore, UK

★ Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives

★ GOI, Ministry of Labour

★ Decathlon

★ Childline India Foundation

★ GOI, Ministry of Women & Child
Development