

FOCUS



VOICE OF SURABI



EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

As India embarks on the journey of general elections, it's crucial to underscore the foundational principles of citizenship rights and address the critical issue of girl children's education. In a nation as vast and diverse as India, the essence of democracy lies in empowering all citizens, regardless of gender, with equal access to education and opportunities.

While voting is a fundamental duty in a democracy, it's essential to ensure inclusivity, transcending barriers of socio-economic status, gender, religion, or ethnicity. Upholding the rights of every individual to freely and fairly exercise their franchise is paramount for the vitality of democracy.

Education serves as a cornerstone of empowerment, fostering critical thinking, informed decision-making, and civic engagement. However, persistent disparities, especially concerning girl children's education, remain a challenge.

Investing in the education of girl children is not just a matter of social justice; it's an investment in the nation's future. Studies have

consistently shown that educating girls leads to numerous positive outcomes, including improved health, economic prosperity, and gender equality.

Tamil Nadu has been a trailblazer in promoting education, particularly for girl children. Innovative initiatives like Surabi exemplify grassroots efforts to empower young girls and enhance women's participation in education and beyond. Surabi's holistic approach nurtures confidence and resilience in girls, paving the way for their active involvement in society.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all partners and donors who champion girls' education and women's empowerment initiatives. Their support is instrumental in driving positive change.

As we navigate the democratic process, let us choose leaders committed to ensuring the safety and empowerment of young girls and women. Together, let's build a more inclusive and equitable society for all.



Fr. Joseph Leo,
Director - SURABI

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Creating Equal Rights to Learn Educational Scholarship to Physically Challenged Students

On April 30th, 2024, SURABI successfully collaborated with United Way of Chennai, Guindy, Chennai, to secure a generous sponsorship for distributing educational scholarships to 14 physically challenged students. This initiative aimed to support and empower deserving students to overcome physical challenges and pursue their academic aspirations without financial constraints. The scholarship program significantly boosted 14 students in total, with eight new students receiving Rs.10,000 each to support their educational journeys. Additionally, six returning students who had received scholarships the previous year were rewarded based on their exceptional academic performance. These scholarships provided financial assistance and reflected our unwavering commitment and belief in these students' potential to thrive academically despite their challenges.

DISABILITY SCHOLARSHIP 2023-2024

₹1,03,200	>	3 STUDENTS Don Bosco Polytechnic College - Basin Bridge
		1 STUDENT Don Bosco Arts and Science College - Kilpauk
	<	₹20,000
₹42,400	>	2 STUDENTS Don Bosco College (CO-ED) - Yelagiri Hills
		2 STUDENTS Don Bosco College Arts and Science College - Karaikal
	<	₹20,000
₹50,000	>	5 STUDENTS The Sacred Heart College - Tirupattur
		1 STUDENT Don Bosco College Arts and Science College - Dharmapuri
	<	₹10,000



PROMOTING EFFECTIVE, INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN PONNERI TALUK

ANGANWADI RENOVATION IN KATTAVUR

In an effort to improve the quality of early childhood education and care, a comprehensive renovation of the Kattavur Anganwadi center has been completed. This renovation included painting, artwork, electrical work, toilet renovation, and water facilities. The project was supported by Bosconet, Give, and Ashirvad through the Integrated Rural Development program. The renovated Anganwadi now provides a safe, nurturing, and conducive learning environment for 20 children. This project is a testament to the power of strategic planning, collaborative engagement, and concerted efforts in promoting the holistic development and well-being of future generations.



PROVIDING LEARNING MATERIALS TO ELAIMBEDU AND KATTAVUR ANGANWADI CENTERS

The provision of learning materials such as numerical towers, puzzles, shape tables, and baby chairs in Anganwadi centers offers holistic benefits for the development of 60 children. This initiative has been taken by SURABI in Elaimbedu and Kattavur Anganwadi centers through the Integrated Rural Development project supported by Bosconet, Give and Ashirvad. These materials stimulate cognitive, linguistic, and social-emotional growth by fostering numeracy skills, language development, creativity, and fine motor skills. Additionally, they create a comfortable and engaging learning environment, encouraging active participation and curiosity among children. Overall, the presence of these learning materials enriches children's educational experiences and supports their overall development in the Anganwadi settings.

RO WATER INSTALLATION IN KATTAVUR AND ELIAMBEDU SCHOOLS

In an effort to ensure access to clean drinking water for the 300 school children of Elaimbedu and Kattavur, SURABI has installed Reverse Osmosis (RO) water plants in both schools through the Integrated Rural Development project, which is supported by Bosconet, Give, and Ashirvad. The installation of RO water plants in Eliambedu and Kattavur schools is a remarkable example of prioritizing the health and well-being of students through access to clean drinking water. This initiative demonstrates the effectiveness of systematic planning, diligent execution, and collaborative engagement in addressing essential needs within our communities.



INTERACTIVE SMART BOARD DISTRIBUTION

Elaimbedu and Kattavur schools have received six BenQ Interactive Flat Panel 65" Model: RE7503 each, courtesy of SURABI, as a part of the Integrated Rural Development project. This initiative is supported by Bosconet, Give, and Ashirvad. These smart interactive boards provide a dynamic and engaging learning experience for students by making the lessons more interactive and interesting. With the ability to display multimedia content, such as videos, animations and interactive simulations, these boards help to clarify complex concepts and improve the understanding of the students.

DISTRIBUTION OF BENCH AND DESK FOR ELIAMBEDU SCHOOL

As part of an effort to improve the learning environment at Elaimbedu School, SURABI has distributed 50 sets of benches and desks through the Integrated Rural Development project supported by Bosconet, Give, and Ashirvad. The distribution of these sets represents a commitment to providing a comfortable and conducive learning environment for 175 students. This effort demonstrates the importance of collaborative work in enhancing educational facilities and fostering student success.



The Future is Female

Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress.

International Women's Day is celebrated to emphasise the importance of empowering women and promoting gender equality in all aspects of life including politics, economics and social spheres. The day celebrates women and addresses issues such as women's equal rights, violence and abuse against women and reproductive rights.



Kattavur

Surabi organized a Women's Day celebration on 12-04-2024 as part of its Integrated Rural Development project in the villages of Elaimbedu and Kattavur. The event was held at Elaimbedu and involved stakeholders from both villages. The theme of the celebration was "Pengalin Valarchiyae Gramathin Marumalartchi" (Growth of Women is the Revival of the Village), highlighting the important role of women in community development. The event was made possible through collaboration with donor organizations such as Ashirvad, Give, and Bosconet. The chief guests of the event included Ms. Shoba, Advocate, Fr. Santhanam, Director of Bosconet, Dr. Anu Rathna, MBBS, DGO, Fr. Joseph Leo, Director of Surabi, Ms. Suguna Sivakumar, Panchayat President of Elaimbedu, and Ms. Mangai Umapathy, Panchayat President of Kattavur.



Basin Bridge

Don Bosco Social Service Society, in partnership with Rotary Club Chennai and coordinated by SURABI, organized a loan distribution program and Women's Day celebration at Basin Bridge on April 6th, 2024. The event started at around 4:30 pm with a devotional song and dance performance, and approximately 1000 Self Help Group Women participated in the program.

The loan distribution function was attended by several notable individuals, including Fr. Joseph Leo, Director of SURABI, Fr. Sebastian, Director of DBSSS, Fr. Joy Kurian, parish priest, Administrator Fr. Anand ITI, Fr. Sundar Doss, Principal, Mr. Ravi, Rotary Club president, Mr. Guru Moorthy, Mr. Abdul Rahman, Mr. Anand, Mr. Balaji, Rotary Club members, and Ms. Semmalar-Professor MS. Sharmila Advocate (Madras High Court), who were invited as special guests for the program.



Polur

On March 10th, at 10:30 AM, VIA Polur organized a successful Women's Day celebration that was attended by Self Help Group members and esteemed guests. A total of 340 Self Help Group members participated actively and benefited from the program. The event was graced by Chief Guests, Fr. Joseph Leo SDB, the Director of SURABI, and Mrs. Rani M.A, Inspector of Women's Police, Polur.

By celebrating International Women's Day, we express our commitment to promoting gender equality and empowering women. Through a variety of activities and initiatives, we celebrate women's accomplishments while acknowledging that there is still progress to be made to achieve true equality for all. We are thrilled to continue our efforts to empower women and to build a more inclusive and equitable society.

NAVIGATING BARRIERS AND CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENT

International Women's Day holds profound significance as a global platform to celebrate the achievements, contributions, and resilience of women worldwide.

It serves as a poignant reminder of the ongoing struggle for gender equality and the need to dismantle barriers that inhibit women's progress. By honouring the accomplishments of women in various spheres of life, the day amplifies their voices, inspires future generations, and fosters solidarity in the pursuit of gender parity.

It's a time to recognise women's indispensable role in shaping societies and economies, driving positive change, and reaffirming the commitment to building a more equitable and inclusive world.



My name is Fathima Mary and I am 60 years old. I am a member of the Vетtri Thilagam Self Help Group and I have six children. All of my children are married

and doing well. Initially, I used to borrow money from outside sources to take care of my family expenses. However, after joining the self-help group, I took a loan of 80000/- after three months and started a venture.

Thanks to the internal loan from the group, I have been running a successful business so far. The income from my business is useful for my family expenses and helping my children. I am proud to say that I am living without any debts.



I am J. Bharathi Priya, an educator with a background in M.Sc., B.Ed. in Computer Science, and a Higher Diploma in Software Engineering (HDSE).

I have been teaching at Don Bosco Matriculation Higher Secondary School Redhills for the past fourteen years. Continuously evolving my teaching techniques. I am dedicated to educating students on the responsible use of media through our school's media club. The Salesian Institution has been instrumental in shaping my professional journey as an educator. Their mentorship has facilitated my growth, equipped me with new knowledge, and guided me in setting achievable career objectives.



I, Renitha Vijayakumar MA, B.Ed in English, handling XI and XII English at Don Bosco Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Katpadi. I deem it a great privilege, the will of God and the

mentorship of all the Salesian Fathers that this academic year 2024-25 I am given an opportunity to be the Vice Principal of Don Bosco institution. I am also the member of the Salesian lay leadership program (SLLP) and the INM school commission where, as a lay person I am given the liberty to express my views and opinions for the betterment of the Salesian school and community. I was also chosen as a Women Achiever by the VIA Don Bosco for International Women's Day in 2019 I am grateful to St. Don Bosco and our beloved Mother Mary and all the Salesians for making me so efficacious.



A four-day workshop on "Writing Proposals for Community Development Projects" was organized by BOSCONET, New Delhi and facilitated by SURABI, Chennai. The workshop aimed to help 15 participants involved in community development under the INM Province, including directors, project coordinators, and community workers, to learn how to conceptualize proposals professionally and effectively. The participants included eight males and seven females.

The session began with a prayer song to express gratitude to the almighty for the blessings. Fr. Joseph Leo, Director of SURABI, welcomed the participants warmly and encouraged them to sharpen their writing skills during the workshop.

Fr. Don Bosco L, the Provincial of INM Province, gave the inaugural address and emphasized the importance of creativity and empathetic transformation in community development. Fr. Edwin Vasanthan, Economer, INM Province, gave a special address and advised the participants to keep the ground reality and truthfulness to the project, people, and the donor in mind while learning proposal writing. The learning material was then introduced and distributed to the participants. Fr. Santhanam, Director, BOSCONET, Delhi, spoke to the participants virtually and explained the historical perspective of community development, starting from the Charity Model to the Sustainability Model.

During the workshop,

the trainer delivered an insightful overview of goals and objectives, describing their distinct roles within project planning. Goals were big-picture aims for long-term change, while objectives were smaller, short-term achievements accomplished during the project period.

Mr. Christoph, Project Manager at Don Bosco Mondo, provided a special address on the expectations of international donors when writing project proposals. The ceremony concluded with the distribution of certificates to participants, culminating in a group photo to commemorate the successful completion of the workshop. Overall, the four-day workshop was a comprehensive and enriching experience for all participants.



EMPOWERING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC GROUPS WITH AN INNOVATIVE FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTING TRAINING



The BRIDGE Project Training Program is an innovative initiative that aims to bridge the gap between education and industry. The program equips participants with essential skills and practical experience in various fields. A total of 30 SHG members actively participated in the training program. Participants arrived and registered for the program, and during the first session, Mr. Annasamy gave an outline of sustainability and its importance in finance management. In the third session, Mrs. D. Jeyalakshmi discussed various lines of action and strategies for organizational development and growth. Fr. Christhu Raj SDB delivered the concluding talk, summarizing the key takeaways from the training program and encouraging participants to apply the knowledge gained in their respective organizations.



BRIDGING THE SKILL GAP AND EMPOWERING YOUTH FOR A PROMISING FUTURE

IBM SKILLSBUILD is an incredible program that provides free online courses to students. It was launched in Tamil Nadu in September, and REACHA & SURABI organized orientation sessions for students in 17 institutions. We explained the various courses available on the IBM SKILLSBUILD portal and guided students on how to access them.

Our orientation sessions were successful, and we onboarded 5839 students. These students have gained valuable knowledge and skills from

the courses offered on the IBM SKILLSBUILD portal, and they have received certifications that will enhance their career prospects.

The list of colleges that we oriented includes Sacred Heart College in Tirupattur, Don Bosco College in Yelagiri and Dharmapuri, Don Bosco Arts and Science College in Chennai, SIGA Polytechnic College and Don Bosco Polytechnic College in Chennai, Don Bosco Polytechnic College in Basin Bridge and Thirukazhukundram, Sagayathottam Institute of Agriculture and Rural Development in Sagayathottam, Don Bosco ITI in Polur, Don Bosco Vazhikaatti in Perambur, Don Bosco Arts Science

College in Karaikal, Auxilium College (Autonomous) in Vellore, Loyola ITI in Ranipet, Auxilium BED College in Vellore, Annai Violet Arts and Science College in Chennai, Thiruthangal Nadar College in Chennai, and Mar Gregorios College in Mogappair.

We are proud to have played a crucial role in the success of this program, and we look forward to continuing to support IBM SKILLSBUILD in empowering more students with knowledge and skills that will help them achieve their goals.

INSPIRING YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS TO BE LEADERS



On March 1, 2024, SURABI celebrated womens Day for the young and adloescent girls in the vulnerable communities at Don Bosco Polytechnic College in Thirukazhukuntram. As part of the celebration the 120 women and 25 Adolescent girls were trained on three different topics such as Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and Menstrual Health (MH), Rights of Women and Government welfare schemes for women.

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and Menstrual Health (MH),

Ms. Kanchana, Program Coordinator at Thozhamai, was the resource person for the SRHR training. During the session, Ms. Kanchana discussed the myths and facts surrounding menstruation. She provided tips and techniques for maintaining good health during menstruation. The participants learned about health products and services offered by the government related to SRHR. A menstrual cycle tracker for the participants to track their mood swings for one year. The goal of the training was to help the participants understand the



emotional and physical changes that occur during menstruation.

Rights of Women

In women's rights training Ms. Kanchana addressed the challenges women face in achieving their rights and the progress made towards realizing them. The multifaceted nature of women's rights was elaborated upon, covering political, economic, social, and reproductive aspects. Despite historical struggles, progress has been made through legislative reforms, increased female representation, and grassroots activism. The participants engaged actively, realizing the extent of discrimination they faced within their community. The interaction highlighted the importance of raising awareness and fostering empowerment for a

world free from discrimination and oppression.

Government welfare schemes for women.

The Legal Advocacy on Welfare Schemes training, educated the participants on legal schemes available to support women in Tamil Nadu. The resource person highlighted various schemes, including Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy's Maternity Benefit Scheme and Tamil Nadu Government Schemes for Girl Child. Participants discussed strategies to address implementation challenges and inefficiencies. The session concluded with participants gaining valuable insights into the support available to them. They were encouraged to disseminate the knowledge gained and advocate for the effective utilization of legal schemes.

MICRO FINANCE FOR SHG WOMEN



@ Basin Bridge

50 SHG members received 40,000/- each as loan to support their family.



@ Veeralur

20 SHG member received 30,000/- each as loan to support their family.

UPCOMING EVENTS



DISTRIBUTION OF LOAN FOR SHG MEMEBERS

Basin Bridge



GREEN AUDIT VISIT

INM Province selected Institutions



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD

Chennai

SURABI

Strategic Urban Rural Advancement Backing Institute

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