

















ASHA TRUST

Annual Report

2025-26

Asha Samajik Vidyalaya
(Asha Community School)



Background & History:-

The Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, Nagapur, Raajatalab, Varanasi, is operated jointly by Asha Trust. It was founded in 1994 by Nandlal Master Ji — then a trustee of Asha and convener of Lok Samiti — who began teaching children informally during his own student years.

At the time, the region was economically deprived. Families engaged in weaving and daily labour could not afford to send their children to school. Young children worked alongside their parents on looms and in households, and some were even bonded to moneylenders. In response, Master Ji began holding evening classes in the community's own settlement.

As enrolment steadily grew, his mother, the late Smt. Kesara Devi, generously donated her land for the school. With support from the local community, a bamboo enclosure was erected and a thatched hut set up as the first classroom. Over the years, the thatched structure gave way to a tin-roofed room, which was eventually replaced by a permanent pucca building — a journey that spanned nearly three decades.

Today, Asha School is the only Asha-owned school in the country with formal government recognition. It serves economically disadvantaged children from weaver and labourer families, offering them a pathway to realise their potential. Reaching this milestone has taken approximately thirty years of sustained effort and community commitment.

Key Activities (2025-26)





- The academic session commenced with fresh student registrations in April.
- Regular classes were fully operational from the second week of April.
- NCERT textbooks were distributed free of charge to students in Classes 6, 7, and 8.
- Birth anniversaries of national luminaries were observed by sharing their thoughts and values with students.
- The science laboratory was actively used for hands-on experiments, promoting experiential learning.
- Sports and films were incorporated as pedagogical tools to complement classroom learning.
- On Menstrual Hygiene Day, senior girl students received health and hygiene education along with sanitary pad distribution.
- Summer vacation was observed from 20 May to 30 June.
- Full academic sessions resumed in July.





•Through a partnership with Feeding India, all students receive a cooked breakfast and mid-day meal daily, resulting in marked improvement in attendance and concentration.
•All students were enrolled on the school's online portal.
•National holidays and festivals were celebrated with enthusiasm.
•The CLE team provided online classes in English, Mathematics, and Science to students of Classes 6, 7, and 8.
•Students participated in tree-planting and care activities within the school premises to foster environmental responsibility.
•Social engagement and community service were integrated into the school curriculum alongside academics.
•A street play (nukkad natak) on anti-addiction was performed by members of the Prerna Kala Manch alongside school students.























•Students were registered for the Navodaya and CHS entrance examinations.
•A memorial gathering was held in honour of the late Smt. Kesara Devi — the school's founding patron — during which her life and contributions were commemorated.
•Half-yearly and annual examinations were conducted for holistic student assessment.
•A comprehensive health check-up was organised for all students in partnership with Feeding India.
•A condolence meeting was held on the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
•A delegation of teachers and students from Denmark visited Asha School and gifted shoes and socks to all students.
•The school's girls' kabaddi team performed with distinction in the interschool competition.












Kishori Silai Kadhai Kendra (Girls' Tailoring & Embroidery Centres)

Overview



The Kishori Silai Kadhai Kendra, operated by Asha Trust, runs 18 permanent tailoring and embroidery centres across villages in the Araaji Line and Sewapuri blocks. Approximately 400 adolescent girls and women are currently enrolled in vocational training. Upon completing the programme, participants gain the skills and confidence to become economically self-reliant. The centres also organise a range of complementary activities as outlined below.









Key Activities (2025-26)

- A community survey was conducted among adolescent girls in April, along with distribution of sanitary pads.
- Birth anniversaries of national leaders were observed at the centres alongside vocational training.
- On Menstrual Hygiene Day, trainees organised awareness rallies through their villages on menstruation and reproductive health.
- Social and national festivals were celebrated at all centres.
- Parent-teacher meetings were held twice during the year.
- A three-day residential workshop on menstrual health and general well-being was conducted for trainees.
- Tree-planting was carried out at the homes of trainees and women members during the monsoon season, along with a pledge to nurture the saplings.
- To preserve the dying folk traditions of Kajli — folk songs and music — trainees participated in the Kajari Mahotsav, winning second place.
- Preparations for the Balika Mahotsav (Girls' Festival) were undertaken at all centres.
- The Balika Mahotsav was organised at four locations, with four centres joining at each venue. Participants led rallies, performed street plays, and used songs and music to voice their demands for rights and dignity.













- Teachers from all tailoring centres participated in segments of the Padyatra (peace march) from Rajghat, Varanasi to Rajghat, Delhi — organised to promote unity and communal harmony.
- On Nirbhaya Diwas, trainees organised a bicycle rally from their villages to the Raajatalab Tehsil, submitting a 10-point charter of demands to the Sub-Divisional Magistrate.
- A two-day residential training workshop was held for all tailoring teachers.
- With support from CLE Bangalore, 8 school dropout girls are completing their graduation degrees.
- The Red Brigade, Lucknow conducted self-defence training sessions for trainees across all centres.
- On National Girl Child Day, a girls' kabaddi tournament was organised for the first time, with participation from all centres.

The event significantly boosted participants' confidence and enthusiasm.

- An educational excursion was organised for trainees to Sitamarhi, Mirzapur.
- Certificates were awarded to all girls who completed their tailoring training.











Achievements

1. Trained girls are becoming self-reliant. Bindu Chandapur), for instance, now runs her own tailoring centre in Dangariya. Sunita secured employment at a garment company in Gujarat. Many others are now supporting their families through their skills.
2. Muslim women are increasingly stepping out of their homes to enrol in the tailoring programme.
3. Trainees are beginning to speak more openly about menstruation and reproductive health.
4. Active and enthusiastic participation in residential training workshops.
5. The inaugural kabaddi tournament generated tremendous enthusiasm and raised the confidence of participating girls.
6. Two trainees are now imparting tailoring and embroidery training at schools in their communities.
7. Girls are asserting their rights and stepping into public life.
8. Exceptional performances at the Balika Mahotsav.

Challenges

1. Insufficient sewing machines to serve the growing number of trainees at each centre.
2. Girls in many villages continue to face restrictions on leaving home.
3. Resource materials on health and women's rights are needed at all centres.
4. Sanitary pads should be made available at all centres on a regular basis.

Swayam Sahayata Samuh (Self-Help Groups)

Overview

Asha Trust and operate women's self-help groups (SHGs) across 80 villages in the Araaji Line and Sewapuri blocks. In addition to managing the SHGs, the organisation works actively on issues of domestic violence, child marriage, sexual violence, and alcohol prohibition.

The primary objective of the SHG programme is to liberate marginalised communities from the grip of moneylenders and exploitative creditors, enabling them to build financial independence. The programme also focuses on fostering attitudinal change, raising awareness of rights, and empowering women to become self-sustaining contributors to their households and communities.







Total Savings	₹6,14,5800
Total Interest Earned	₹1,04,3790
Total Penalties Collected	₹7,210
Miscellaneous Income	₹13,320
Total Loans Disbursed	₹63,92,300
Balance in Fund	₹8,22,820







KEY ACTIVITIES (2025–26)

•Regular group meetings were held, with members trained in maintaining and reconciling accounts.
•Women are utilising their collective savings to start small enterprises in their villages.
•Products such as washing powder, pickles, and preserves(Murabba) are being made and sold to generate livelihood income for members.
•Block-level meetings on women's rights were organised quarterly in both Araaji Line and Sewapuri blocks on three month interval.
•Tree-planting was carried out during the monsoon season to promote environmental stewardship.
•Block-level office-bearers for the SHG federation were democratically elected.
A legal literacy and constitutional rights camp was organised for women members.









•Street plays (nukkad nataks) were performed to inform communities about government schemes and entitlements.
•Village-level disputes — including domestic conflicts — were mediated and resolved through group dialogue.
•National festivals were celebrated jointly with SHG members.
•Birth anniversaries of national icons were commemorated in the communities.
•Participants in the constitutional padyatra were welcomed on their return to their villages.
•A 16-day campaign against gender-based violence was observed with torchlight processions, candle marches, and community assemblies across villages. A memorandum of demands was submitted to the SDM, Raajatalab at the closing event.

Women's Day Celebration

Bungalow, Raajatalab. Nearly 3,000 women from 80 villages attended, raising their voices on issues of education, health, safety, and rights. A spirited rally against alcohol prohibition was conducted from the venue to the Raajatalab Tehsil, where a 10-point memorandum of demands was submitted to the SDM. The event concluded with a cultural programme celebrating women's resilience and agency.

•A residential training camp was organised for SHG members at the Lok Samiti office.

•Constitution Day was observed in schools and villages through interactive sessions on fundamental rights.













Dihaadi Mazdoor, Yuva & Bunkar Sangathan (Daily Wage Workers, Youth & Weavers' Organisation)









Overview & Key Activities (2025–26)

The Dihaadi Mazdoor, Yuva aur Bunkar Sangathan (Daily Wage Workers, Youth, and Weavers' Organisation) operates across 18 villages in the Araaji Line and Sewapuri blocks. The following programmes were conducted during the year:

•45 daily wage workers were registered with the Labour Department and issued Labour Cards.

•65 existing Labour Cards were renewed for daily wage workers.

•12 daughters of daily wage workers were married under the Chief Minister's Samuhik Vivah Yojana, enabling them to benefit from the government scheme.

•A five-day Training of Trainers (ToT) on shared cultural heritage (Saanjhi Virasat) was conducted.

•15 weavers were issued Bunkar Cards (weaver identity cards), and 5 weavers received flat-rate electricity connection cards for their power looms.

•Tree-planting activities were conducted with youth and workers to promote environmental awareness.

•National festivals were celebrated with workers and youth in their villages..









•A block-level meeting with workers was convened, with district-level officials responsible for labour and weaver welfare invited to participate.

•Members participated in segments of the padyatra from Rajghat, Varanasi to Rajghat, Delhi.

•A 16-day anti-violence campaign (Mahila Hinsa Virodhi Pakhwada) was marked through village chaupal sessions, torch-lit marches, and rallies to promote women's safety and dignity.

•Youth Day was celebrated through community clean-up drives.

•National holidays and commemorative events were observed with local communities.

•Workshops on the Constitution and social harmony were conducted with youth groups.

Holi Milan and Eid Milan gatherings were organised with workers, weavers, and youth to foster communal amity and brotherhood







Achievements

•15 daughters of daily wage workers benefited from government schemes.
•45 workers were enrolled under government insurance of ₹5 lakh each through Labour Cards.
•25 weavers gained access to the flat-rate electricity scheme, enabling them to run their power looms at subsidised rates.
•Two daughters of labour cardholders were enrolled in Atal Bihari Residential Schools through the Labour Card scheme.

Challenges

•Scheduling and sustaining engagement with male members remains a logistical challenge.
•Persuading youth to commit to residential training programmes is difficult.
•Workers must repeatedly visit government offices to access scheme benefits, which is time-consuming and discouraging.









Asha Gyan Pustakalaya (Asha Knowledge Library)

Background

The Asha Gyan Pustakalaya, located in Nagapur, Raajatalab, Varanasi, was established in 2015. At that time, educational conditions in rural areas were challenging — while parents managed to enrol children in school, the high cost of textbooks meant that many students had to drop out midway.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the library became a lifeline. As schools and colleges shut down, families with means arranged online classes for their children, but rural students had no such access. Adhering to COVID-safety protocols, the library distributed books to students, enabling them to continue their studies through the crisis.

Today, approximately 2,000 students from 25–30 villages across the Araaji Line, Sewapuri, and Kashi Vidyapeeth blocks are members of the library, using it as a resource to complete their education and pursue their aspirations.







Achievements

Azim Premji University



Varsha, Anish, and Anjali are pursuing undergraduate degrees at Azim Premji University (APU) in Bangalore and Bhopal on scholarships valued at ₹21 lakhs each.

Sankara Hospital Chennai



Khushi, Ranju, and Mahima are undertaking a nursing course (ophthalmology) at Shankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore on scholarships of ₹12 lakhs each.

Girl Icon Project



17 girl students received scholarships of ₹20,000 each under the Girl Icon Project to support their studies.

Banaras Hindu University



Akash is pursuing a B.Sc. at Banaras Hindu University and Sanam at Allahabad University.

Help for the library



Gulshan, Vijay, Deepak, Pawan, and others are now serving in government positions and continue to contribute books to the library.

Garment Company in Delhi



Khushboo, having completed a fashion design course, is employed in Noida — a remarkable journey for a village girl.

- Assistance was provided to students in filling forms for entrance exams and scholarship applications.
- Library students won second place in the kabaddi competition, bringing recognition to their community.
- Career counselling workshops were held with expert guidance for students.
- Eight dropout students are completing their graduation with support from CLE Bangalore.
- 41 academically promising but economically disadvantaged girls received bicycles to ease their daily commute to study.
- Felicitation ceremonies were held periodically to recognise and motivate students.
- Noted social activist Medha Patkar visited the library.
- Educational excursions were organised to Allahabad and Mangadh.



the challenge

1. Rural girls still lack a conducive study environment at home. A digital library facility is urgently needed to enable them to study both online and offline at the library.
2. Frequent changes in prescribed textbooks by schools make it difficult to maintain an up-to-date collection.
3. Girls continue to face social resistance to studying outside their homes.
4. Growing enrolment means the current book stock is insufficient to meet demand.

Kishori Summer Camp 2025: Skills, Confidence & New Beginnings

Following an annual tradition spanning 15 years, the Kishori Summer Camp 2025 was successfully organised at Lok Samiti Ashram, Nagapur, from 15 May to 15 June 2025, under the joint auspices of Asha Trust

The camp is designed to educate, empower, and enable the economic independence of rural adolescent girls. Its core objective is to provide need-based, interest-led, and skill-oriented training that helps girls take confident steps towards self-reliance. This year, approximately 108 girls from various villages participated enthusiastically.
Over the one-month programme, a wide range of training modules and activities were offered to build personality, confidence, and employable skills:







Core Month-Long Training







Beautician Training



Computer Training







English Speaking



Self-Defence Training



Dance Training

Special Sessions & Activities

01 Scooty (two-wheeler) riding lessons

02 Arts and craft training

03 Career counselling sessions

04 Visit to a local police station (thana bhraman) for civic awareness

05 Epidemic / health emergency awareness workshop

06 Handicraft training

07 Music and folk song programme



The summer camp not only equipped participants with practical skills but also fostered self-confidence, leadership, and social awareness. It proved to be a meaningful initiative for rural girls in their journey towards a brighter, more independent future.





Major Programmes by Asha Trust

01 In partnership with Feeding India (Zomato), fresh cooked breakfasts and mid-day meals are provided daily to all students of Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, Nagapur.

02 As in previous years, clay water pots (matkas) were set up in the ashram courtyard during summer, providing free drinking water to passers-by.

03 Through Feeding India and Jan Rasoi Ghar, approximately 1,600 children across 36 anganwadi centres in Benipur Nyaya Panchayat and 41 centres in Kurauna Nyaya Panchayat receive cooked breakfasts and midday meals daily.

04 A Chirag aur Mohabbat (Light and Love) event was organised at Lok Samiti Ashram to promote communal harmony and brotherhood.









Iftaar parties and Holi Milan celebrations were organised to foster harmony and the composite Ganga-Jamuni culture. Hundreds of participants from diverse communities attended.



















- Seasonal seeds were distributed free of charge to small and marginal farmers.

- To support women's economic independence, members have been producing and selling washing powder, pickles, preserves, and papad.





- Awareness rallies against alcohol consumption, child marriage, and dowry were conducted across villages in Araaji Line and Sewapuri blocks.

- A three-day constitutional rights workshop was held at Lok Samiti Ashram.

- An end-of-year community meal was held at Lok Samiti Ashram for all team members and associates.
- External partners and supporters visited to witness and appreciate the work of Asha Trust
- On the occasion of Martyrdom Day (Shahadat Diwas), posters of 50 great personalities were displayed at Primary School Nagepur
- In opposition to the Kashi project, Lok Samiti colleagues and farmers were placed under house arrest.
- To empower women economically, four electric autos are being driven by women through a collaboration between Feeding India and Lok Samiti.















Participated in different programs.



New office-bearers connected to the organisation were selected in arajiline and Sewapuri block



A new building has been constructed for the Digital Library.



Union Bank provided a water cooler for the benefit of school children and villagers.



Participants in the social-issue march were welcomed at Lok Samiti Ashram on their return.



A free cataract screening and surgery camp was held in partnership with Marwari Hospital, Varanasi. Of 120 elderly persons screened, 15 underwent cataract surgery and received spectacles. The camp also identified a high prevalence of hypertension and diabetes.







A SPECIAL FEATURE OF THE ASHRAM AND SCHOOL CAMPUS: LUSH WITH TREES, PLANTS, AND FLOWERS, AND HOME TO RABBITS, DOGS, AND CATS LIVING IN HARMONY, ALONG WITH PLAYFUL CALVES — ALL ADDING BEAUTY AND LIFE TO THE SCHOOL AND ASHRAM PREMISES.




















Azim Premji
University
ಪ್ರೇಮ್‌ಜಿ ಯೂನಿವರ್ಸಿಟಿ


SUCCESS
DREAM • BELIEVE • ACHIEVE




Azim Premji
University
अज़ीम प्रेमजी यूनिवर्सिटी


आशा
ज्ञान वाचनालय
एवं पुस्तकालय
लोक समिति आश्रम, नागेपुर-वाराणसी




Azim Premji
University
ಪ್ರೇಮ್‌ಜಿ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯ


SUCCESS



Varsha

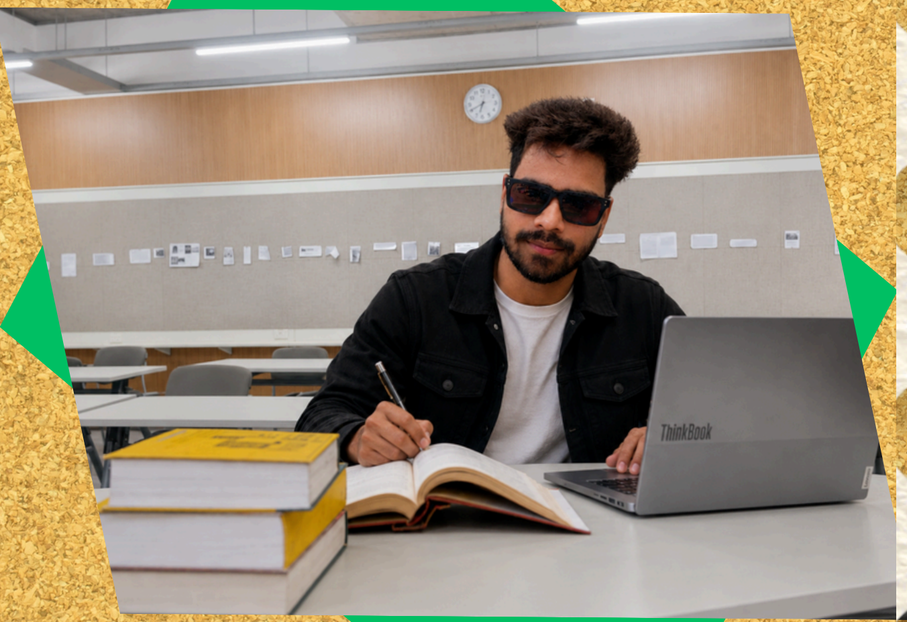


Varsha is a girl from a low-income family of Nevaj ka Pura, Benipur village, under Mirzamurad police station, Varanasi district. Her father's name is Bhailal and her mother's name was Bindu Devi. Varsha also has a younger sister and a younger brother. When Varsha was eight years old, her mother passed away due to illness. Her father does daily wage labour and remains absorbed in drinking alcohol, taking no responsibility for the family. Under the care of her paternal uncle, Varsha studied up to Class 5 in the village school, after which she was admitted to Kasturba Gandhi Residential School, Bhikhaaripur, for Class 6, where she received accommodation and meals along with education.

While studying at Kasturba Gandhi School, Varsha was selected as a Girl Icon. In this role, she began raising awareness among her classmates and girls from rural areas about hygiene and health. For this purpose, she was called to Lucknow four times for training. She also received some financial support from the Milan organization for her education. While continuing her studies and awareness programmes, Varsha completed her junior-level education. When she again faced difficulties in pursuing further studies, she was admitted to the Kasturba Hostel in Sewapuri, from where she completed her High School and Intermediate examinations.

After passing High School, she was admitted to Hathi Barani Intermediate College for further studies. A government hostel for girls in Sewapuri, five kilometres from the school, provided her a place to stay while she continued her studies. Fighting through these difficult circumstances, Varsha passed her Intermediate examination with First Division. To pursue higher education, a form was filled for Azim Premji University (APU), Bengaluru, with scholarship support. Upon clearing the entrance exam and interview, she received a scholarship worth Rs. 15 lakhs to pursue a graduation degree in Sociology. Varsha is currently completing the final year of her graduation and is also working part-time. She is the first girl from her village and community to leave home and pursue education — a true inspiration for others.

Anish Kumar



Anish Kumar, son of Vijay Kumar, is a student from a humble family in Nagepur village, Rajatalab area, Varanasi district. His family consists of his parents and four brothers, of whom Anish is the youngest. His father works as a labourer and his mother is a homemaker. The family's financial condition was not strong, but his parents always strived to educate their children. Managing the education of all four brothers along with household responsibilities was a great challenge for his father. Earning through daily wage labour to sustain the entire family was not easy. Due to these circumstances, the education of the two elder brothers was cut short — a source of grief for the family. However, this became a source of even greater determination and confidence for Anish.

Anish completed his early education up to Class 5 at Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, Nagepur. This school laid a strong foundation for his education and instilled in him discipline and good values, giving his life a new direction. From childhood, Anish had a keen interest in studies and always sought to learn something new. After Class 5, he was admitted to Shiv Charan Smarak Intermediate College, Mehdiganj, where he studied from Class 6 to Class 12. During this time, he also connected with the Asha Gyan Pustakalaya (library), where he received good books and valuable guidance. Studying while living in a rural environment was a different experience — he had to manage household chores alongside school, but he never lost focus on his studies.

After completing his Intermediate, Anish began looking for new opportunities for higher education. He learned about Azim Premji University through the library. He applied for admission but was not selected in his first attempt, nor in his second. However, he did not give up. Despite repeated failures, he kept his confidence intact and continued preparing. On his third attempt, he successfully gained admission to Azim Premji University (APU), Bhopal with a 100% scholarship (worth Rs. 21 lakhs). This was a deeply significant and memorable moment in his life — a matter of great pride for his family and the village. Anish is currently pursuing a B.A. in Social Science, exploring issues related to society, education, and rural life. His dream is to do meaningful work for society and become an inspiration for both his family and the children of his village. Anish's story shows that with hard work and perseverance, even the most difficult paths can become achievable.



Anjali

Anjali lost both her parents in early childhood and has been raised under the guardianship of Ranju Singh, Director of Lok Chetna Samiti. She completed her schooling up to Class 12 at Sant Joseph Convent School's hostel, receiving her education at no cost. For higher education, an application was made on her behalf through the Asha Library for a fellowship at Azim Premji University. On her second attempt, Anjali secured a 100% scholarship.

Today, Anjali is studying B.A. Honours in English and Economics at Azim Premji University, Bangalore — turning personal hardship into a story of extraordinary determination.

Khushbu



Khushbu is a student from a rural area. Her father is a farmer burdened with debt, which meant he could not pay attention to his children's education. After completing her primary education, her father did not want to educate her further. With the support of Asha Gyan Pustakalaya, she completed her High School and Intermediate at the village school itself. As is common in rural society, daughters are rarely given the opportunity to pursue higher education, and accordingly, her father once again did not want her to continue studying. However, Khushbu was determined to continue her education and become self-reliant.

When no path forward was visible, she shared her situation with the senior brother (mentor) at the library. He spoke with her parents and supported her cause. With the help of the library, she filled the entrance exam form for a Polytechnic course and was selected for the Fashion Designing course at the Government Polytechnic College, Sundarpur, Varanasi. After completing three years of study, she went to Noida for an internship. Upon returning, she was placed in a large garment company in Delhi. She is now working in Delhi, standing on her own feet, and supporting her family. These daughters are an example for society — their journey is opening doors for other girls from rural areas as well.

Three Rural Daughters Pursuing Nursing at Coimbatore on Full Scholarships



In a region where many girls face barriers to higher education, three exceptional young women — Ranju (daughter of Ramvilas, Mohan Sarai, Wairwan), Mahima (daughter of Sipahi, Nagapur), and Harshita (daughter of Shyamsundar, Khewli) — have earned admission to the ophthalmology nursing programme at RJM Shankara Hospital, Coimbatore, one of India's foremost eye care institutions.

Each of the three students has received a scholarship of ₹2 lakhs along with full provision for tuition, accommodation, and meals for the three-year nursing course. Upon completion, they will be offered placement directly at the hospital. All three come from weaver, labourer, and farmer families, and are members of Asha Gyan Pustakalaya, Nagapur, Raajatalab.

We extend our warmest congratulations and best wishes to Ranju, Mahima, and Harshita — may you continue to shine, achieve your dreams, and inspire countless others who follow in your footsteps.

Manish Kumar Patel



My name is Manish Kumar Patel. My father, Vijay Kumar Patel, is a hardworking labourer, and my mother, Usha Devi, is a homemaker. We are four brothers, and I am the third. I completed my early education up to Class 5 at Asha Samajik Vidyalaya, near my home, passing out in the year 2013. I then took admission at Shri Ambika Prasad Singh Inter College, approximately 2.5 kilometres from home, and completed my education up to Intermediate there. I am currently pursuing an M.A. in Geography. I am extremely proud and fortunate that today I am teaching at the very same Asha Samajik Vidyalaya where I studied as a child — and I have the special joy of working alongside the very teachers who educated me nearly 13 years ago.

Asha Samajik Vidyalaya is an institution that provides quality education with practical learning to children from poor and ordinary families at minimal fees, up to Class 8. This school is making a vital contribution to building the bright futures of its students. I express my heartfelt gratitude to Asha Samajik Vidyalaya — it is because of the values, education, and guidance received here that I have been able to reach where I am today.



Shiv Kumari
Village Khalispur

Shiv Kumari, wife of Shri Mohan, has been associated with a Self-Help Group (SHG) since 2018. Her family comprises two sons and one daughter. The family's livelihood was entirely dependent on her husband's daily wages as a masonry worker. One day, a sudden road accident changed the family's life completely — her husband's leg was fractured, rendering him unable to work for a long period. The family's financial condition became extremely dire; managing daily household expenses became difficult, and their daughter's education was interrupted.

In this difficult situation, instead of giving up, Shiv Kumari sought support from her Self-Help Group. She took a loan from the group and purchased a casting machine worth approximately Rs. 1,50,000. With this support, her husband was able to restart his work, and gradually the family's income began to increase. Today, her family is once again becoming self-reliant. Her daughter has resumed her studies and the household's financial situation has improved considerably. Shiv Kumari is also regularly repaying the group's loan. Her story shows that with self-confidence, hard work, and the support of a group, even the most difficult circumstances can be overcome and life can be given a new direction.

Duija Devi
Kachnar,Rajatalab



Duija is a woman from a modest family whose financial situation was extremely weak. Her husband, addicted to alcohol and gambling, did not fulfil his family responsibilities and remained indifferent, leaving the entire burden of the household on Duija. The family has two sons and two daughters. Due to financial constraints, the children's school fees could not be paid on time and their education was disrupted. Duija had to face numerous problems and struggles in these difficult circumstances.

In 2024, Duija joined a Self-Help Group (SHG). Through this connection, she gained financial support and self-confidence. She took a loan from the group and started a vegetable stall. Through hard work, dedication, and persistent effort, she gradually grew her business. Today, Duija is independently bearing the expenses of her family and has resumed her children's education. Her hard work and self-reliance are a source of inspiration for other women. This success story demonstrates that if women are given proper support and opportunities, they can overcome even the most difficult circumstances and become self-reliant.

Student Mentorship Programme

RCMS (Ramanujan Centre for Studies in Mathematical Sciences)

My purpose in establishing RCMS is to develop a scientific mindset in students and to cultivate in them a habit of learning by doing. To achieve this, I have adopted approaches such as designing hands-on activities, encouraging the habit of questioning, and practising self-directed learning. Weekly discussions are held to inform students about career paths related to their subjects — what they need to study, how to prepare, which institutions to target, which examinations to clear, and how best to approach their studies.

Monthly film discussion sessions are organised to deepen students' understanding across various subjects. These sessions involve question-and-answer exchanges on the story, characters, and themes of selected films. Every year, on the occasion of National Mathematics Day, a three-day workshop is held. It covers the lives and contributions of eminent mathematicians, the significance of India's premier mathematics research institutions, their work, and how to connect with them. Films related to mathematics — such as Imitation Game, A Beautiful Mind, Stand and Deliver, and The Man Who Knew Infinity — are also screened.

To improve communication and interview skills, our associate Mr. Anant Sridharan, based in Australia, connects with the students twice a week to conduct language practice and interview preparation sessions. Whenever he visits India, he meets the students in person. During one such visit, students were taken on educational excursions to the Heritage Toy Industry in Varanasi, Ramnagar Fort, the Lalpur Art and Craft Museum, and JHV Mall.

Professor Dr. Nitya Kichaloo of Johns Hopkins University also periodically engages with the students to guide them in mathematics.











Students are regularly encouraged and supported to participate in national and international examinations — such as the Olympiad conducted by the Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (HBCSE), the Lodha Genius Programme, and the Anveshana examination organised by Prayoga Institute, Bengaluru. These experiences broaden their horizons, familiarise them with the culture of competitive examinations and interviews, and serve as a source of motivation.

Morning fitness sessions are organised as per the availability of space and students' interest, to improve health and physical well-being. Every Wednesday morning, a Literary Club session is held, in which students engage with literary works beyond their school curriculum.

Project Bodhaayan

As part of our effort to connect RCMS students with subject-matter experts from various fields, we brought on board our friend Dr. Piyush Shrivastava, a Post-Doctoral Scientist at the University of Oxford. He began holding weekly conversations with the students on topics related to science and the natural world, which gradually evolved into a full-fledged Project-Based Learning initiative.

Students would discuss subjects with Dr. Piyush, spend the week deliberating among themselves, conduct small experiments, and then return the following week with questions. This cycle continued consistently, steadily deepening the students' interest in experimentation. Dr. Piyush then proposed that the students travel to Bengaluru to carry out a project at Prayoga Institute.









The students went to Bengaluru, where they conducted experiments on Piezoelectric Discs, learned the underlying concepts, and presented their findings before the scientists at Prayoga Institute. Upon returning, they prepared a formal presentation and delivered it with full confidence before the assembled scientists of the Bodhayana group.

Today, the programme has grown considerably. Students from three centres affiliated with Asha Trust — Kaithi, Chakrapanpur, and Nagepur — have now joined the initiative. We are working to expand it further by developing new modules on Energy and Quantum Communication.







CONTACT US:-

Office:- Lok Samiti Asharam/Asha Samajik Vidyalaya
Village:- Nagepur, Post:- Benipur, District:- Varanasi - 221307

+91-9415300520, +91-8808984224

loksamiti@gmail.com

https://chicago.ashanet.org/project/

https://www.facebook.com/loksamitivarnasi/



Nagepur, Benipur, Varanasi - 221307