

View Point

VOL.6 NO.5



**November & December
2023**



**The Retreat - Don Bosco
Yercaud**



View Point, the e-magazine, showcases a comprehensive report on the various social interactions and activities carried out by the SPS India Foundation and its sister Organization, Shevaroyhills Tribal Development Institute (STDI), at the Retreat Don Bosco in Yercaud.

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Banking and Savings Education

On November 6, 2023, the SPS India Foundation, in partnership with the Desai Foundation Trust, organized a Banking and Savings Education Creativity event for students in Yercaud. The objective was to equip students with essential financial knowledge and skills, providing them with a comprehensive understanding of banking systems and the significance of saving money.

Banking & Saving Education



The financial sector offered valuable insights into banking fundamentals, financial planning, and the advantages of cultivating a saving habit from their young age. To ensure active participation and a hands-on learning experience, practical workshops and interactive sessions were conducted. This collaborative initiative between the SPS India Foundation and the Desai Foundation Trust underscores their dedication to education and community development. By imparting financial knowledge to young minds, the initiative aims to equip students with the tools needed for responsible financial management, ultimately contributing to their long-term economic well-being.





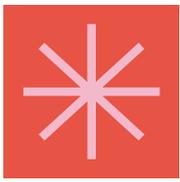
Chocolate Making Training

On the 23rd of November 2023, the SPS India Foundation, in collaboration with the Desai Foundation Trust, organized a workshop on chocolate crafting at Retreat Don Bosco in Yercaud. This initiative was aimed to equip recipients with extensive knowledge and practical skills in the art of chocolate making.



Conducted by Ms. Yuva Sri, a proficient baking trainer and young entrepreneur, the one-day session exuded a refreshing and enthusiastic approach. Participants, primarily from Yercaud's tribal communities, actively participated in the training, demonstrating eagerness and a genuine interest in acquiring new abilities. The program fostered community unity and collaboration among the attendees. Group activities and discussions encouraged a shared sense of purpose, facilitating the exchange of ideas and experiences. Moreover, the training acted as a platform to preserve the cultural significance of chocolate making within the Yercaud Tribal Community.





Children's Day and Health and Hygiene Awareness

On the 26th of November 2023, a lively Children's Day program unfolded on a Sunday, bringing joy to 200 enthusiastic children. The event kicked off at 10:00 am and wrapped up at 4:00 pm, brimming with laughter, creativity, and spirited competitions. The day commenced with warm greetings, establishing the mood for a memorable celebration. To ensure the well-being of the children, nourishing tea and a delightful lunch were provided, fostering a positive and comfortable atmosphere.

Throughout the day, a variety of engaging programs held the children's attention. The speech competition showcased their eloquence and confidence, while the dance competition allowed them to express their creativity through movement. The highlight was the fancy dress competition, where imagination took center stage, transforming the event into a visual spectacle. Special health and hygiene awareness for the children was presented by Fr. Arul Maran, the Rector, emphasizing the importance of caring for the health and the environment.





Children's Day and Health & Hygiene Awareness

As part of the festivities, the day also served as the Prize Distribution ceremony for outstanding performers in the programs conducted at their night study centers. This recognition added an extra layer of motivation, encouraging the children to persist in their dedication to learning. The venue echoed with a sense of camaraderie and joy as the winners were announced and applauded.



The event not only celebrated Children's Day but also underscored the significance of education and skill development, promoting a holistic approach to their growth. In conclusion, the Children's Day program was a resounding success, leaving a lasting impression on the hearts of the 200 participating children. The day stood as a testament to the power of community, encouragement, and the boundless potential that lies within every child.



Jewellery Making Training

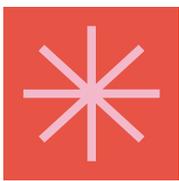
The SPS India Foundation, in partnership with the Desai Foundation Trust, orchestrated from 4th to 9th of December, a week-long jewellery-making initiative for tribal women residing in the village of Manjakuttai, Yercaud. The primary goal of this program was to enhance and elevate the tribal community by offering skill development opportunities specifically tailored for women with tribal backgrounds. The participants actively took part in hands-on sessions guided by proficient and seasoned trainers, encompassing a diverse range of jewellery-making techniques. The curriculum covered essential methods such as beadwork, wire wrapping, and basic metalwork, empowering the women to craft distinctive and marketable pieces.



The commitment of the SPS India Foundation to community development was evident, as they not only supplied the required materials and tools but also underscored sustainable practices and ethical sourcing. Participants not only gained practical knowledge of the entire jewellery-making process, from design inception to the final product but also developed a comprehensive understanding of the craft. Beyond the immediate focus on skill development, the program addressed social and economic facets, promoting entrepreneurship among the tribal women. Attendees received education on market trends, pricing strategies, and the potential for establishing micro-enterprises, paving the way toward financial independence.



This week-long initiative surpassed mere skill acquisition; it fostered a sense of establishment and community among the participants. The exchange of ideas and experiences, coupled with encouragement from trainers and organizers, cultivated an empowering and supportive environment. The collaborative efforts of the SPS India Foundation and the Desai Foundation Trust exemplified the potential of amalgamating skill development with community engagement for comprehensive empowerment and a positive, enduring impact on the lives of tribal women in Yercaud.



Medical Camp at Vellakadai Promoting Health & Well-being

A medical camp, assisted by the Retreat - Don Bosco was held in Vellakadai, Yercaud. This Medical Camp was held on 3rd December 2023 on Sunday from 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. and aimed to provide accessible healthcare services to the tribals and people of remote villages, addressing various health issues and promoting overall well-being. Organized by Salem Polyclinic Hospital, the event brought together a team of healthcare professionals, volunteers, and residents in a collaborative effort to enhance the health of the community by offering free medical check-ups and consultations to the residents of Vellakadai and to create awareness about preventive healthcare measures and promote a healthy lifestyle. A team of qualified doctors and healthcare professionals offered free consultations to individuals, addressing a wide range of health concerns. This included general check-ups, dental examinations, eye screenings, and counseling on chronic diseases and in a special way on cancer.



Essential medications were provided free of cost to individuals diagnosed with specific health conditions. This initiative aimed to ensure that individuals have access to necessary medications for their well-being. The event fostered community engagement by involving local volunteers and leaders. This collaborative effort helped in reaching a larger target group and addressing specific health concerns within the community. The Medical Camp at Vellakadai proved to be a significant step in promoting community health and well-being. By providing accessible healthcare services, raising awareness, and engaging the community, the event contributed to improving the overall health status of the residents. The success of this initiative highlights the importance of community-driven healthcare efforts and encourages the continuation of such events in the future.



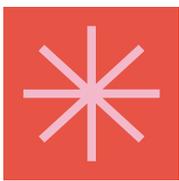
The Visit of Fr. Provincial of INT

On December 5, 2023, Fr. Agilan, the Provincial of the Salesian Province of Trichy, was warmly welcomed by the SPS India Foundation for a productive review meeting. The gathering, consisting of 35 members, including program executives and implementers, facilitated positive interaction among them. The event began with a welcoming address from Fr. Selvakumar, the project director of the SPS India Foundation. Following this, Ms. Kiruthiga, the program executive from the Desai Foundation Trust, shared insights with implementers and the data support team, addressing queries and compliance matters.



Fr. Agilan dedicated valuable time to engaging with implementers and community facilitators, attentively listening to their experiences categorized by zones. Subsequently, the data team provided an overview of their work, emphasizing the significant impact made through night schools in caring for students. During the session, several women expressed gratitude towards Fr. Selvakumar and the SPS India Foundation for organizing the spice-making program. This initiative has empowered women across Tamil Nadu, especially in areas like Yercaud, Salem, Dindigul, and Namakkal. The women completed assigned tasks, contributing to progress in certification and marketing. This program has instilled positivity among women, making their lives remarkable and providing self-confidence, thereby paving the way for home-based businesses.



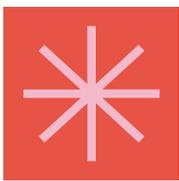


Sharing of Gifts in Night Schools

The night schools' pre-Christmas celebrations were filled with festive spirit and joy as students, teachers, and the Retreat staff came together to usher in the holiday season. The celebration was held on the following dates from 13th to 15th of December in each night schools respectively. The night school premises were adorned with colorful decorations that created a warm and inviting atmosphere. The students showcased their talents through various cultural performances, including carol singing, dance routines, and skits, spreading the joy of Christmas and highlighting the diversity of the villages.

Inspiring guest speakers - fathers from the Retreat Don Bosco - shared messages of hope and encouragement, emphasizing the importance of education and perseverance, especially in the context of night schools. A delightful feast awaited everyone, featuring a variety of traditional Christmas treats and refreshments. Sharing gifts provided an opportunity for everyone to come together and strengthen the sense of community. The event concluded with a moment of reflection, expressing gratitude for the hard work and dedication of both students and night school teachers. The pre-Christmas celebrations in night schools not only brought festive cheer but also highlighted the resilience and determination of those pursuing education during unconventional hours. It served as a reminder that the spirit of Christmas transcends time and circumstance, uniting individuals in the pursuit of knowledge and community.





SPS Creates Women Entrepreneurs

A meeting was held with the Food Safety Officer in Yercaud, where the FSSAI registration certificates were distributed to newly registered entrepreneurs on December 20, 2023, at Retreat Don Bosco. Individuals from Yercaud who underwent the Entrepreneur Development Programme (EDP) and business training, registered their businesses with MSME and applied for FSSAI basic registration. Mr. Suruli, the Food Safety Officer of Yercaud, provided education and awareness to the trainees on food safety, label regulations, and more. Nine women were presented with FSSAI registration certificates during the event. Fr. Selvakumar SDB, Director of SPS India Foundation, coordinated the arrangements for the meeting, while Ms. Sangeetha, Programme Manager of Your-Backers Foundation - Siragugal, also attended.

Furthermore, Your-Backers Foundation Siragugal, in collaboration with SPS India Foundation, organized a Self-Sustainable product making workshop for women in Yercaud on October 29, 2023, at The Retreat, Yercaud, and for Dindigul women on October 31, 2023, at Don Bosco Social Service Centre, Dindigul. Mrs. Priyadharshini Ranganathan, a Self-Sustainable Living Expert, conducted training on oral care, skin care, hair care, and masala products. In Yercaud, 49 women participated, with 45 of them registering for the intensive follow-up online training on sustainable product making. From this group, 13 women were selected for the Entrepreneur Development Programme (EDP) business training. In Dindigul, 42 women participated, with 32 registering for the intensive online follow-up training for one month. Among them, three women expressed interest in undergoing EDP training. A total of 16 women were shortlisted for EDP training, and 14 actively participated in the full training session. Currently, eleven of them have successfully registered their businesses with MSME.





Wishes...

A New Year's Blessing

Here's wishing you a Happy New Year. May this season fill your home with joy, your heart with love, and your life with laughter. May you be surrounded by love and warmth during this new year.



**THE RETREAT - DON BOSCO
YERCAUD**