



‘माहेर’ने गरजूंना दिला घासातील घास

शिरूर-हवेली तालुक्यातील ४४२३ कुटुंबांना अन्नधान्याची मदत

कोरेगाव भीमा, ता. ३ : दानशूरांच्या मदतीने निराधारांना आधार देणाऱ्या वट्ट बुद्रुक (ता. शिरूर) येथील माहेर संस्थेने कोरोनामुळे उद्याचे भविष्य अवघड दिसत असतानाही डगमगून न जाता स्वतःच्या घासातील अर्धा घास काढून समाजातील गरजूंना दिला. या मदतीमुळे अनेकांच्या चेहऱ्यावर समाधान झळकले.

‘एक हात मदतीचा’ या उपक्रमाद्वारे माहेरने शिरूर हवेलीच्या २१ गावांमधील ४४२३ कुटुंबांना अन्नधान्याची मदत केली तर साडेतीन हजारांपेक्षा जास्त मजुरांना मायेचा घास भरविला.



वट्ट बुद्रुक (ता. शिरूर) : माहेर संस्थेने दिलेल्या जेवणाचा आस्वाद घेताना गरजू नागरिक.

लॉकडाउनच्या काळात माहेरच्या संस्थापिका सिस्टर लूसी कुरियन यांनी आपल्याकडील जेमतेम

असलेल्या अन्नधान्याचे वाटप केले. त्यानुसार शिरूरमधील पारधी समाज, विटभट्टी कामगार, पेरणे

फाटा येथील झोपडपट्टी तसेच कोरेगाव भीमा, डिंग्रजवाडी, जातेगाव, मुखई, आपटी, केसर्नंद, लोणीकंद, वाघोली, वडगाव शेरी आदी २१ गावांत तसेच मिरज व रत्नागिरीतील गरजू कुटुंबांनाही अन्नधान्य वाटप केले. तसेच रस्त्याने जाणाऱ्यांना कुरियन व अध्यक्षा हिराबेगम मुल्ला यांच्या मार्गदर्शनाखाली अतुल शेळके, विष्णू सूर्यवंशी, सुरशील पोहेकर, रमेश चौधरी, प्रकाश कोटावळे, विजय तवर, राजेंद्र साकोरे, प्रफुल्ल सरदार, आनंद सागर यांनी विशेष परिश्रम घेत जीवनावश्यक वस्तूंचे वाटप केले.

Maher has helped 4423 Poor Families in Shirur, Havili Taluka with food grains

A Word from the Sister



The world is going through a terrible time. The coronavirus pandemic has claimed more than five lakh lives worldwide. At the time of writing, the number in India has already exceeded 20000. We do not know where the virus is going to lead us to. It has truly levelled down every one of us- poor and wealthy, ugly and handsome, illiterate and learned, wise and dumb, black and white, powerful and weak, god-fearing and wicked....

At Maher we felt especially responsible with its 1,500 residents ranging from the new born infants to 80+. We right away directed our office to issue precautionary instructions to all our residents. We are fortunate that things are fine so far and we hope they would be so in days to come too.

The lockdown has aggravated feelings of loneliness especially among the elderly and the infirm. People who were already lonely are probably going through the worst patch of their life today- loneliness coupled with prospects of infection and death. This is a unique illness where the victims spend days together under the shadow of an uncertain future without their

dear ones around to share their concern and fears.

I suppose we need to safeguard ourselves with the Four Walls of Protection. The immunity and physical strength which I call the First Wall of Protection is of course of the utmost importance in this situation. But there are other three walls of protection which are equally important and to which not much attention is being paid. These are our emotional strength, mental strength and the spiritual strength. With the wall of our physical strength coupled with the other three walls around, we will be more than capable to counter any external threat to our well-being.

In Maher, I am proud to say that right from its inception we have been taking care of all these four aspects though their importance has become much more obvious in the frightening scenario of today. Prayers have been an integral part of Maher culture and I believe they endow us with great inner strength of mind. With caring for the mentally disturbed men and women having been a very important part of its work, Maher has been long familiar with the mental aspect. For many of them the mental challenge has resulted from their loneliness and destitution. With its emphasis on vipassana and yoga, Maher underlines the spiritual aspect as well. In the same way as we need all four walls to make a room, we need to build these four walls around us to make our life, whether coronavirus or not.

I am sure we will soon be out of the current period of darkness, wiser and better able to counter the challenges in life.

I feel thankful to all Maher workers who have put up with an extra amount of effort and strain over last three months. They are still doing so as our fight against coronavirus continues without break. I also express my sincere gratitude to all who have stood by Maher and supported us during this difficult period. The modern technology has proved a great boon during the present time. I am happy that our children have amazingly adapted themselves to the digital and other modern forms of technology to catch up with their studies. I wish them all the best.

Sister Lucy Kurien
Founder-director, Maher

Four Walls of Protection

1. Physical strength: You can maintain and build your physical strength by eating Maher's home-cooked, fresh, warm and nutritious food. Gargle with salt water, drink only warm water and take all of the vitamins that are provided to you. Do yoga regularly, spend time in the sun and drink as much water as possible. Maintain a clean body, wash your hands frequently and while we have a limited space, keep as much physical distance as you can to keep the virus away.

2. Emotional strength: You all receive a lot of love from the Maher staff, friends, and housemothers. For those of you who have relatives, you receive a lot of it from them too. This loving support is important for it strengthens your emotional well-being that can help you conquer the virus.

3. Mental strength: Keep yourself updated about coronavirus through Maher bulletins, street plays, TV news, and newspapers. This information will make you knowledgeable and confident to protect yourself and your community from the disease. It will make you a mentally strong person to deal with an emergency if at all.

4. Spiritual strength: **A strong spiritual connection with the Divine helps you in difficult situations.** That is why we have daily meditation and prayer at Maher. When we are not able to visit a temple, mosque, church or a synagogue or not able to be in nature as at present, why not open our heart to the Divine energy through our daily prayers and meditation? Our spiritual strength will help us stay strong and healthy through a period like the current one. And if at all the virus does come our way, we accept it with poise and take all the necessary healing measures. We will never give up.

- Sister Lucy's

NATIONAL OFFICE & MAHARASHTRA

Maher makes a steady march toward its Silver Jubilee. Vadhu, Perumpilly, Satara



Short of two years for its Silver Jubilee, Maher celebrated its 23rd anniversary on February 2, 2020, as usual in the presence of a large number of guests and well-wishers. The celebration was presided over by Mr. Suresh Bhujbal, Vice President of the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya.

Mr Bhujbal in his speech appreciated Maher's work and remarked that he sensed a divine image in the form of Sister Lucy Kurien. He appealed to the audience to lend an unreserved support to her work and help uplift the condition of the poor and abandoned.

Ms Savita Pahad, Deputy Chairperson of the Shirur Panchayat Samiti, appreciated Maher's work and volunteered to help Maher in its dealings with government.

The programme also featured the release of the Maher newsletter and the Italian version of the book, *Women Healing Women*, written by American scholars, William Keepin and Cynthia Brix. The book contains a detailed account of Maher's work since its inception and holds out the Maher experiment as a model for world to follow. We are especially thankful to Ms Anna Maria Foli for the hard work she has put in for the translation of the book into Italian.

The ex-students of Maher presented on the occasion a cheque of Rs 1,50,000 to Sister Lucy as a token of their gratitude towards her. The money will be utilized for the promotion of various Maher projects.

On the occasion Sister Lucy also gave away the Maher annual awards for distinguished performance to the best of Maher's boys, girls, housemothers, housefathers, social workers as also to its children's home. The awards were:

■ **Best Maher Boy:** Prathamesh Ghisare ■ **Best Maher Girl:** Divya Yadav ■ **Best Maher Housemother:** Sarika Vanjare ■ **Best Maher Housefather:** Jeevan Thapa ■ **Best Maher Social Worker:** Prakash Kothavale ■ **Best Maher House:** Karunalaya ■ **Best Maher Worker:** Ramesh Chaudhari ■ **Best Maher Performer:** Vinayak Gade.

A few of Maher beneficiaries also spoke on the occasion in gratitude of Maher:

1. **Kavita Kadam** entered Maher with two children following the death of her husband. Now both of her children are in the 12th standard. More notably she herself passed her 10th standard examination as an open school candidate and completed a nursing

course.

2. **Suresh Gholap** was picked up from street by Maher workers. An alcoholic, he made several attempts to run away from Maher but finally settled in Maher after several sessions of counselling. All three of his daughters grew up in Maher with one of them happily settled in marriage.

3. Following the death of her mother, and her father turning an alcoholic, **Rutuja Bhuse** entered Maher with two of her siblings. After an initial period of defiance and indiscipline, they sobered down and became accustomed to Maher's atmosphere. At the time of the anniversary, Rutuja was looking forward to a year in Germany for her higher studies. Her sister having completed a nursing course is now working in Sadhu Waswani Hospital while her brother is pursuing higher studies in Pune.

On the occasion, **Gaurav Jagtap** and **Sagar Wavare** related their experiences in Germany where they had been deputed by Maher as interns. **Prathamesh Ghisare** and his brother **Adesh** entered Maher as orphans but were now pursuing higher studies. All of them expressed thankfulness to Maher for opening a new and fresh life for them.

The programme began with Maher children and women presenting two beautiful songs: 'We Together Change the World' and 'Hech Amuchi Prarthana An Hech Amuche Magane'.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Vatsalyadham Director, Suprabha Alhat.

The anniversary was also celebrated at Maher Snehabhavan, Kerala, on 8 February 2020. The meeting was inaugurated by John Ernakulam, Principal of St. Philomina's Public School, Elanji. The celebration was blessed by Swami Sachithananda Bharati. The main speech was given by Mr. Saji Mulanthuruthy, Public Library President. Besides children and the staff, the programme was also attended by parents and well wishers of Maher Snehabhavan.

At Satara, the Maher birthday was celebrated on 6 February 2020. Maher President Ms. Hirabegum Mulla took an overview of Maher's work over last 23 years. Maher student Mangesh Pol in his speech highlighted two Maher values- world peace and love for the mankind.

Maher Vishvadeep completes a milestone

Maher Vishvadeep, Miraj, one of Maher's leading children's and women's homes out of Pune area, celebrated its milestone 5th birthday on 25th January 2020. It was attended by a number of Maher friends and workers. The speakers were all in appreciation for the work Maher was doing in the area and wished the Maher workers well on completing 5 years of their work in Miraj.

Antony Raju, who presided over the ceremony, spoke on human rights which have assumed a very important place in modern times in the field of social and community work.

Dr Joon Ann, one of the eminent invitees to the function, admired the work Sister Lucy was doing for the destitute and the abandoned, and declared on the occasion an award in appreciation of her work. Mr Vijay Dhumal presented to the Maher unit a steam inhaler and a thermometer, very befitting instruments in the present situation.

MLD School, a very novel project of Maher, inaugurated

Due to the closure of schools and colleges during the lockdown

period, it became essential to do something to make up for the loss of studies. Sister Lucy therefore called a meeting of the staff to discuss the issue. This led to homeschooling effort at all Maher centres.

As a part of this policy, Maher Lucy Didi (MLD) School, a very novel project designed by the Maher staff, was inaugurated on 14th June 2020 at the Vatsalyadham premises at the hands of Maher president Ms Hirabegum Mulla and in the presence of children and Maher well-wishers. The school, appropriately named for Sister Lucy, aimed at bridging the gap in the children's studies and thus assisting them in their studies during the lockdown period when their regular schools remain closed. The project will be temporary



and limited to Maher children.

The school timings are from 8.30 am to 5.30 pm on all weekdays. Amrapali Ankushe and Yogesh Waghmode will respectively work as heads of its English and Marathi wings. Besides the regular subjects, the homeschooling will include sports and arts as well like dance, drama, music, tabla, drawing, yoga, meditation, indoor and out door games.

Student Suraj Gupta expressed thanks for the extra effort that Maher was taking for the students. Vote of thanks was proposed by Ms Aruna Paswan, member of the teaching staff of the school.

Maher takes immediate precautionary steps to stall covid-19 spread

The world is going through a very difficult and frightening period. The deadly coronavirus has claimed thousands of lives all over the world. Maher has taken immediate steps to protect its residents from the virus. Some of the measures it has taken include the following:

- Immediate restrictions on visits by visitors, volunteers and outsiders to Maher shelters as also on Maher residents leaving Maher premises.



- Awareness programmes for all the staff and children with regard to the spread of the disease and precautions to be taken with the help of street plays, videos and slide shows.

- Provision of the required quantities of hand wash, towels, soaps, masks for the children and the staff.

- Purchase of enough groceries to avoid frequent purchases and the possibility of infection.

Besides the regular subjects, permission for the staff to work from home, wherever possible.

- Video conferencing facility for the staff working from home wherever possible.

- Multivitamin tablets/ syrups were given to boost the immune system of Maher residents.

- Thorough and regular check on the quality of the food, vegetables and fruits.

- Separate rooms and beds and also an isolation home with clean linen is kept ready for the sick in case of an emergency

- All the surrounding areas of the centers are always kept clean.

- To keep the morale high, prayers are being conducted across all our centers for the early end of the pandemic.

Maher contributes to the mitigation of the woes of migrant workers in a big way

On 25th of March, Maher workers noticed some people begging for food at the gate of its office. On further enquiry, they found that they were migrant workers- sugarcane cutters- who had lost their jobs and were on their way to their native place. Maher immediately cooked food and served it to them. This led the Maher social workers to visit all the slums that Maher was involved with within a radius of 85 kilometres and to study the entire situation





there. The settlements visited included the beggar's colony, tribal villages, brick-kiln employees, migrant workers and slum dwellers. Maher staffs subsequently were busy preparing cooked meals/snacks for breakfast, lunch and dinner for many days. The Maher workers cooked meals for almost 400 to 600 people a day at different centers of Maher. They also distributed masks and sanitizers to those who needed them. It was very heartbreaking and painful to see their condition.

Maher is happy that as of today it has reached out to more than 6000 families which meant over 24000 people. It provided food to over 25000 people who were walking back home. Every day Maher workers were serving cooked food from three different Maher centers.

In this endeavour of Maher, it received generous help from local people and foreign volunteers. Maher and Sister Lucy are grateful to them all.

Maher workers go a long way to ease the miseries of lockdown

Maher has tried to ease the scary and stressful situation created by the lockdown and the coronavirus by lending a helping hand to indigent families in the villages around. This has been done through distribution of ration and essential articles of daily use among the affected population. The beneficiaries included members of the Pardhi community in Shirur, brick kiln workers, Perne Phata residents, members of the Thakar community in Thakarvasti as well as poor sections of population in Koregaon Bhima, Dingrajwadi, Jategaon, Pabal, Mukhai, Aпти, Kesnand, Lonikand, Wagholi, Vadgaonsheri, Pune city, Pimpale Jagtap, Shikrapur, Vadhu Budruk, Phulgaon, Dehu, Kendur, Bakori, Miraj and Ratnagiri. The total number of beneficiaries has been more than 4000 spread over 21 villages.

The Maher workers actively involved in this project included Atul



Shelke, Vishnu Suryavanshi, Sushil Pohekar, Ramesh Chaudhari, Prakash Kothawale, Vijay Tawar, Rajendra Sakore, Prafulla Sardar, Anand Sagar, Harish Avchar, Vinayak Gade, Sujay Nair, Madan Sonawane, Prasanjit Gaikwad, Vikram Bhujbal, Ramesh Dutonde, Mini M.J. and many others. The rationed items included rice, wheat, oil, pulses, sugar, pohe, groundnuts, soap, masks, sanitizers, cotton bags, napkins and the like. Many well-wishers of Maher donated generous amounts to support the project. Maher is grateful to them.



Maher holds mental health workshops during the coronavirus period

During the present lockdown, a deep concern is being expressed over mental health issues. In view of this, Maher held two mental health workshops.

Vadhu: The first one was for the staff at Vatsalyadham which houses the mentally disturbed and aged women of Maher. The participants at the seminar held on 23 February 2020, were imparted information regarding mental health and the way the mentally challenged patients should be handled and cared for.

The participants were ably guided by Ms. Varsha Jadhav, medical and psychiatric social worker, and Ms Suprabha Alhat, Director of Vatsalyadham. They were divided into various groups and asked to discuss the mental health issues they came across while working with their patients. This created a base for the subsequent discussion of the mental health issues.

The seminar was attended by 39 Maher housemothers, caretakers and the staff members. They all seemed to be taking a deep interest in the theme of the seminar and contributing to the discussions held.

Avhalwadi: The second workshop was held under the guidance of Mr. Ramesh Dutonde at Vadhu. It was a three-day workshop (15-17 June 2020) which was attended by 24 Maher young boys and girls. The workshop dealt with the symptoms and the treatment of mental health problem.

In his presentation, Mr. Dutonde related following symptoms of the mental ill-health:

- I. Behavioural symptoms: 1. Lack of interest in hobbies 2. Absence of dialogue with the family members 3. Lack of interest in daily work 4. Remaining absorbed in deep thought over long stretches. 5. Lack of concentration and tendency to stay alone
- II. Physical symptoms: 1. Tendency to avoid interaction with others and talk in a very low tone 2. Lack of appetite 3. Feeling of tiredness



III. Psychological symptoms: 1. A constant feeling of frustration and anxiety 2. Suicidal feelings or inclination towards self-injury 3. General lack of enthusiasm and interest.

Suggested home treatment: 1. A daily 30-minute exercise 2. Yoga and meditation 3. Sharing with friends and family members 4. Keeping a smiling face and a pleasant appearance.

Balwadi and Abhyasika Cultural Fete draws big crowd

As many as 400 children and artists joined the annual cultural celebration by 11 Maher balwadis (kindergartens) and 7 Maher abhyasikas (studies). The celebration took place on 19 January 2020, at Anand Balsadan in Kendur under the auspicious of projects Ushalaya and Vidyadhan. Maher has started several balwadis to engage children in studies while their parents are away at work. The abhyasikas have been started to help the school going children concentrate on their studies in a conducive atmosphere.

The participating balwadis included Balshikshan, Adarsh (Jategaon), Asha (Kendur), Navakshiti and Shraddha while the abhyasikas included Adarsh, Divya, Roshani and Jidnyasa. Most of them received one or the other award.

The programme was presided over by Kendur upasarpach Ms. Manisha Thite. Ms Thite greatly appreciated the work being done by the Maher balwadis and abhyasikas in surrounding villages.

The celebration featured individual and group dance performances as also costume competition.



Maher Youth Camp participants leave with an enriched outlook on life

As many as 48 Maher young men and women participated in the Maher Youth Camp which was held from 10 March to 16 March 2020 at Vatsalyadham. The camp featured a wide range of activities

for its participants who carried with them a new outlook on life as the seminar ended.

The camp which aimed at the development of the overall personality of the participants was inaugurated by the Avhalwadi upasarpach Mr. Vikram Kute on 10 March 2020.

The camp organisers had prepared a very busy schedule of activities for all six days. Each day began at 6 in the morning and was over by 10 in the evening. The activities included the following:

1. Group discussions: The topics for discussions included the work being done by Maher for the poor and the destitute, the social issues confronting the youth and the importance of family. These discussions not only sharpened the argumentative skills of the participants; the activity cleared their own doubts on many issues and added to their information and understanding of these issues.

2. Session on sexual matters: The discussion was initiated by Mr Ramchandra Waghmare, Founder of Sarathi Youth Foundation at Solapur. The participants were divided into male and female groups which facilitated free discussion on the subject and cleared many doubts in the participants' mind regarding the sexual issues. Notably Mr Waghmare also talked about the problems of the gay community in the society.

3. Physical activity: The participants learnt the importance of physical activity in life through a great many activities on the Vatsalyadham premises during the camp. These included spreading fertilisers around the trees, farm work, waste management and cleaning of the surroundings.

4. Films: The camp organisers showed a few films to the participants with a view to giving some message to them as also providing them some entertainment. One of the films was '72 Mail Ek Pravasi'. The screening was followed by a discussion on the film.

5. Cooking skills: Manisha Bhosale and Sujata Salve, Maher housemothers, taught participants cooking some essential items like bhakri, chutney, chicken, egg curry and pakodas. The items were very delicious and it turned out to be a feast for all.

6. Yoga, meditation and exercise: It wasn't all within the four walls. Everyday morning it was exercise from 6 to 7. It included zumba dance and a trail in the company of nature without footwear. It was a different experience.

7. Learning activities: The camp included a number of learning activities that gave wise counsel to the participants with regard to a range of subjects as follows:

- **Power of listening:** Very often people are eager to relate their own experiences to others. But they themselves have little patience to listen to others and listen carefully. The camp participants did an exercise that highlighted the importance of listening to others. They listened to each other's views; yet they kept them secret. This was important since it is often that people start gossiping as soon as they have listened to someone.
- **Leadership qualities:** The camp organisers encouraged member participation in organizing various activities throughout. In addition there were separate sessions that aimed at developing among the participants such qualities as elocution, programme planning and management.
- **Mental relaxation:** In yet another activity, participants drew a



mental picture of ups and downs in their life followed by a 5-minute meditation. After the meditation, they exchanged their stories. The exercise resulted in mental and emotional relaxation.

- **Gratitude to dear ones:** There was also an activity where participants drew on the floor pictures of people in their life for whom they felt gratitude. These included their parents, friends, teachers, Maher, Sister Lucy, nature and so on. They all then knelt on the floor and paid homage to these people who had played an important part in their life and for which they felt grateful to them. The activity also involved Maher social workers Sujay Nair and Meena Bhagvat washing the feet of the participants. It was a touching moment for everyone to see this happen in their presence.
 - **Service to others:** This activity underlined importance of service to others. These included helping the elderly Maher residents and the mentally disturbed women at Vatsalyadham. The participants tried to understand their problems and performed small errands for them including some games that brought smiles to their face.
8. A symposium on 'Women's Issues': Considering the gravity of the problem, a special symposium was organized to discuss the issues of women in the country. It evoked sharp reactions from participants. They also discussed whether the person guilty of rape should be given the capital punishment.

The camp activities concluded on 16 March 2020, with Sister Lucy and Hirabegum presiding over the last session.

The camp owed its success to many people who did a lot of hard work for its organization. Besides Sister Lucy and Hiratai, they included Ramesh Dutonde, Mini M. J., Anita Dutonde, Suprabha Alhat, Harish Avchar, Mangesh Pol, Gaus Sayyad, Meena Bhagvat, Sujay Nair, Prasanjit Gaikwad, Sayli Londhe, Amrapali Ankushe and Vikram Bhujbal. Maher is grateful to them all.

Adarsh Gammat Shala and Abhyasika opened

In the presence of more than 400 people including a number of foreign well-wishers, Maher opened on 1 February 2020, Adarsh Gammat Shala (fun school) and Abhyasika (study) at Perne Phata where it has been working for the last 12 years. The shala and the abhyasika will be housed in the newly constructed building. Maher friends from abroad present included Sjoerd Shaaf, Gerrit van der Leeuw, Lynda King and Bernie Hill. The new building was opened at the hands of foreign guests accompanied by Sister Lucy and Hiratai. The ceremony as usual was blessed with prayers from

different faiths.

After Atul Shelke and Nilofar Shaikh introduced the project to the audience, Mr Sjoerd Schaaf, who had been the generous benefactor behind the project, was felicitated with a shawl and coconut. Mr Rajesh Khalse whose house had been burnt down in a fire was presented on the occasion with a few household articles of daily use. Maher social workers involved in the project were also felicitated on the occasion.

The function concluded with a prayer dance by the gammat shala and abhyasika children. The programme was ably anchored by Gaus Syed. Mr Ramesh Dutonde proposed a vote of thanks.

Skill development courses conducted in cooperation with CAF

Maher has continued to conduct skill development courses for women to help them become economically self-reliant and also develop self-confidence in life. In this Maher has received precious cooperation from the Charities Aid Foundation which is a leading international not-for-profit organisation, originating in the UK.

One of such courses, the Beauty Parlour Course, was conducted from 15th October 2019 to 17th February 2020, at Shikrapur. The four-month course was attended by five women who were all present on 12th February 2020 and spoke happily about the course. They were all felicitated on the occasion and awarded a certificate of completion.

Ms Kalpana Gurav worked as the instructor for the course. Prizes were also given away on the occasion to the winners of the 'Cooking Competition' and 'Bridal Makeup Competition'.

There were also two tailoring courses, organised by Maher, in cooperation with CAF. They were conducted from 14 October 2019 to 17 February 2020, and from 23 October 2019 to 31 January 2020.



The certificates for the courses were distributed on 17th February 2020 and 31st January 2020. Ms Varsha Bhor and Ms Suvarna Gugle worked as instructors respectively for the first and the second course. On both occasions, the women students expressed their gratitude to Maher for giving them an opportunity to learn and add to their earning ability.

Ms Parvati Kshisagar, a former student of the course who presided over one of the functions said the course had greatly boosted her confidence. She now successfully runs tailoring classes in Bhima-Koregaon. Ms Shirley Antony, Maher Coordinator, provided guidance in the conduct of the courses.

Maher undertakes to teach cooking skills to housemothers and others

Housemothers are a very important component of Maher in that they are in charge of young children who are still in a developing stage physically and mentally and therefore need nutritious food every day. In a very laudable attempt, Maher organised cooking sessions for the benefit of its house mothers, as well as other women and boys who gave a very good response to the initiative. The project was very ably supervised by Shirly Antony and Tejaswini Pawar. The training sessions were conducted from 18 to 26 June 2020. The food items taught included such essential items as rice and udid chakli, rose cookies, egg biryani, chicken curry, rice, chick peas, pani puri and chappatis. Each session was attended by women, boys and girls numbering from 15 to 20.



MUMBAI

Lockdown drives Neev Home children to adopt digital technology for their studies

The lockdown does have a silver line. It has driven schools, teachers and students to go digital and online in conducting their business. The Neev Home children at Mumbai are exactly doing that and successfully at that.

- To ensure that the learning process isn't affected during the lockdown, the school has formed a class wise WhatsApp groups and children have learnt to download the homework assignments and send their responses through copied images on WhatsApp.
- Children have also learnt to learn and respond to various e-learning activities like spoken English, creative writing, craft and origami, dance movement therapy, fitness and yoga, mobile photography and the like.

- Through video conferencing, the staff is monitoring kids and their work from their home. Individually and through group conference, the staff are trying to be in touch with the kids every day.
- Newspaper reading and discussion is being done with older boys regularly.

Neev Home staff and children distribute rations among the street dwellers

On 19 April, the Neev Home children and staff distributed groceries to 16 families who were living on the streets of Navi Mumbai. The groceries included rice, oil, sugar, soaps, dal and a coconut oil bottle. The donation was sponsored by one of the Neev Home friends, Mr.Kishor. Mr Jonathan supervised the activity.

IN SHORT

Campaign against plastic use, Koregaon-Bhima, Aпти, Perne Phata, Wagholi (January-February 2020)

Maher staff Prasanjit Gaikwad formed a group of Maher youngsters who visited surrounding villages campaigning against plastic use through street plays and group singing.



Participation in Millennium Marathon, Pune (18 January 2020)

40 children of the age group 5 to 10 years enthusiastically participated in this marathon which was conducted at the Shivajinagar Police Ground with famous Indian running champion P. T. Usha presiding over the ceremony. The organisers appreciated

Maher's work and presented a memento to the Maher representatives in honour of Sister Lucy.

Awareness Programme on women's issues, Miraj (22 January 2020)

The meeting was addressed by Ms. Kirti Mahajan and Ms.Sunita Dhulubulu of Inner Wheel, Miraj. They interacted with women on women's issues and rights, and legal provisions in that regard.

Bernie Hill's birthday celebrations, Vadhu, Vatsalyadham (12, 14 February 2020)

Bernie Hill who has been long Maher benefactor and volunteer celebrated her birthday in the company of Maher children on 12th



and 14th February 2020, respectively at Vadhu and Vatsyadham. At Vadhu, children welcomed her with a cultural programmes featuring Takewondo and 'dhol-tasha' (drums and cymbals). At Vatsyadham, the celebration included cooking and drawing competitions as well as cultural presentations.

17th anniversary of projects, Sukhasandhya and Vatsalyadham, Avhalwadi (27th February 2020)



The programme featured cultural items which included dance and karaoke presentations by Sukhasandhya women. There were also short speeches by a few beneficiaries. The function was attended Sr. Lucy, Maher staff and volunteers fro Germany.

Interactive meeting on Maher, Satara (3rd March 2020)

The purpose of the meeting was to interact with and give information about Maher to the people in the surrounding villages. Among others the meeting was addressed by Dr. Wolfgang Schwaiger, long time Maher well-wisher who said he had been inspired by Sister Lucy's work in India and was engaged in similar work in Austria. The programme was attended by around 80 villagers.

Garland making workshop, Bijupara (14th May 2020): Children were taught about garland making from pearls. They were guided by Ms Mukta of Tara Children's Home.

Durga-Avinash wedding, Avhalwadi (18th May 2020)



The wedding was celebrated with enthusiasm in the presence of guests and well-wishers whose number had to be restricted due to coronavirus epidemic. Durga and Avinash are respectively the residents of Vatsalyadham and Karunalaya.

Painting Competition, Bijupara (20th May 2020): The competition was held under the guidance of Ms Divya who took lot of efforts for organising the event. A slow and soft music played in

the background while children were at work drawing beautiful paintings.

Karunalaya Hall inauguration, Avhalwadi (25 February 2020)



The hall was inaugurated at the hands of Shri Prakash Dhoka who has been supporting the Karunalaya project since long. Sister Lucy in her speech appreciated the generous donation given by Mr. Dhoka for the construction of the hall. Mr. Dhoka in his speech underlined the importance of the project Karunalaya and appreciated Sister Lucy for taking initiative for this kind of work. Ms. Priti Dhoka, Mr Prakash Dhoka's daughter-in-law, also spoke on the occasion. More than 300 people were present for the function.

Inauguration of the Bharosa Cell (9 March 2020)

Maher Crane Home was one of the NGOs selected to partner with the Bharosa Cell, initiated by the Government of Maharashtra, to help destitute children, women and the elderly. The programme was attended by Mr. Uday Tikekar, Police Superintendent of Satara.

Coronavirus Awareness Program, Ratnagiri (17 March 2020):

Mr Sunil Kamble, Project Director, underlined during the programme the responsibility of each and every citizen to stem the spread of the coronavirus by taking care of themselves as also by cooperating with the authorities in this difficult period.

Prayer for corona warriors, Ratnagiri and all Maher centers (25 April 2020):

The Ratnagiri children and staff paid tributes to the doctors, nurses, police, cleaners and suppliers of essential items who at the great risk to their life were waging a fight against coronavirus. They offered prayers for the safety of these corona warriors as also for the eradication of the virus that has claimed thousands of lives all over the world.



Guidance for the 10th std. students, Ratnagiri (24th & 28th February 2020): Two guidance sessions for the 10th std students were organised separately at Shirur and Perne Phata under the direction of respectively Mr. Sandip Lonkar of BJS College at Wagholi and Mr. Agre of Shriradchandra Pawar School at Vadhu. Both teachers gave very helpful tips to the students as regards the preparation for the examination and use of barcode. Mr. Lonkar's presentation was mainly with regard to algebra and geometry while Mr. Agre's was helpful for English.

Career Guidance Workshop, Vadhu (18th June 2020): Maher social worker Vijay Tawar addressed a very important career guidance workshop for young boys and girls on 18 Jun 2020. Mr Tawar advised the students to explore the vast world of opportunities open to them in modern times. He pointed out that a salaried job was not the only option before them. Every one of them was a mine of excellent qualities. They needed to explore careers suitable to their qualities. He pointed out to the opportunities for business and appealed them to take up entrepreneurial careers.

Prayer and Meditation Workshop, Bakori, Shirur, Kendur (13th June 2020): Around 60 children attended a Prayer and Meditation



Workshop which was guided by Sangita Guldevkar, Suryakant Guldevkar and Rajratan Hivale. The purpose of the workshop was to inculcate in children a regular habit of performing daily prayer and meditation and develop in them the qualities of love, hope and compassion.



Workshop for Hard Skills and Soft Skills, Vadhu (18 June 2020)

Hard skills are learned abilities acquired and enhanced through practice, repetition, and education. Hard skills are important because they increase employee productivity and efficiency and subsequently improve employee satisfaction. Hard skills focus on practical abilities and skills and enable individual to secure job and job satisfaction. On the other hand, soft skills focus on behaviour of the person and are related to his social and communication skills. They include such skills in a person as an ability to get along with others, patience for listening to others and an ability to make the best use of one's time. The participants were guided by Mr. Sujay Nair who stressed the importance of soft skills in achieving success in life.

SPECIAL DAYS

New Year Celebration, Perumpilly, Bijupara, Miraj, Pune (1st January)

The celebration at Perumpilly began on the eve of the New Year day on 31st December 2019. Mr. E. R. Vijayan, the Project Director, presided over the meeting while Mr. Ajith Kumar, Director of Perfect Spoken English Academy, Mulanthuruthy, gave the New Year message. He advised the children to welcome the New Year with all enthusiasm and strive hard to realise their plans for the year. The cultural show went on till 12 midnight which was followed by the cutting of the cake.



The chief guest distributed on the occasion clothes to the children from Maher, Pune.

In Bijupara, Jharkhand, Maher children and staff celebrated the New Year with villagers of Magumanduru. Maher children joined the Magumanduru residents in performing their traditional dance that created an atmosphere of joy and love. The programme was attended by more than 150 people. On the occasion Maher children presented gifts and blankets to the villagers.

At Miraj, children celebrated the New Year Day by undertaking cleaning a cleanliness drive at Khwaja Vasti.

National Youth Day, Bijupara (12th January)

National Youth Day is celebrated on 12 January being the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. The initiative was taken by the Government of India in 1984.

At Bijupara, the gathering was welcomed by Mr. Francis Minz who emphasised freedom with responsibilities. Mr. Aman had organised a quiz competition on the occasion. It consisted of questions on the life and work of Swami Vivekanand. The programme was attended by around 50 children who also discussed the future leadership in our country.

Maker Sankranti, Bijupara, Perne Phata, Kendur, apti (14th January)

On the occasion of this very important festival when people renew their bond of friendship and affection, Maher children at Bijupara



recited prayers for the well-being of the farmers. Befitting the occasion, Ms. Mukta in her speech underlined the significance of kindness and friendship in life. The festivity was attended by as many as 150 people.

The Bijupara children paid their tributes to the Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi on his death anniversary. They were joined by the self help group members in observing the day. The gathering was addressed by Ms. Agini who underlined the importance of truth and non-violence in the life of a nation as also of an individual. The programme was attended by about 150 people.

At Perne Phata, Sr. Lucy and Hiratai ,Mr.Atul Shelke made it a point to perform the haldi-kunku and sankranti vaan (gifts) ceremony for the widows too. It was a departure from the tradition.

Shivjayanti, Satara, Miraj, Ratnagiri, Pune (19 February)
The programme was presided over by Ms. Archan Gaikwad and Rajendra Barge of Shetkari Sanghatana who asked the children to emulate Chhatrapati Shivaji's ideals into their life and lead a life of self-respect, confidence and honesty. The jayanti was celebrated at Maher Miraj centre also.

Republic Day, Perumpilly, Bijupara, Ratnagiri, Miraj, Pune (25th-26th January)

The Republic Day celebration at Bijupara began with Mr. Francis Minz hoisting the national tricolour at 7.30 in the morning. Mr Minz exhorted children to be always a proud citizen of India which was the largest democracy in the world and which had successfully sustained the democratic values over last 73 years. The programme also featured a small parade by the children.



At Snehabhavan, the Republic Day Celebration was presided over by Mr. Venu Mulanthuruthy (President of Agricultural Co-operative Society) who distributed the dresses to the Maher children. The dresses were donated by the Society of Thuruthikkara.

At Vadhu, kabaddi tournaments were held where the Vadhu, Vadgaonsheri and Bakori teams respectively bagged first, second and third prize. At Vatsalyadham, Maherites participated in an orchestra and dance jointly with the Night Club, Pune.



Vasant Panchami, Bijupara, Ranchi, Goumiya (Jharkhand) (29 January)

Vasant Panchami is a festival that marks the arrival of spring. The festival is dedicated to Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge, language, music and arts. On the day, Maher children at Bijupara took part in the Saraswati Vandana, invoking the blessings of the goddess for their successful academic career. The Vandana was joined by the school children in Huttar as well.

International Women's Day, Vadhu, Avhalwadi, Perumpilly, Ratnagiri, Satara (8 March)

At Vadhu, more than 500 women were present for the celebration of the Women's Day. The programme was presided over by Mr. Ashok Pawar, MLA. A march was taken out from the Sambhaji Maharaj Samadhi to the Maher office at Vadhu, followed by a street play on the coronavirus pandemic. Ms. Tejaswini Pawar and Kalpana Gurav were felicitated on the occasion with the 'Kartrutvavan

Hutatma Din, Bijupara Ranchi, Gomia (Jharkhand) (Martyr's Day 30 January)



Mahila Puraskar' at the hands of Mr. Pawar.

At Avhalwadi too, a march was taken out from Vatsalyadham to Karunalaya. Project Manager Suprabha Alhat gave on the occasion information regarding help centres run by the government for women's protection. Ms. Roopali Kamble spoke about importance of women's unity in their march toward their empowerment. The programme was attended by around 100 women.

At Maher Snehabhavan, Perumpilly, the day was celebrated jointly with Jaihind Anganwadi. Mulanthuruthy ICDS supervisor Ms. Anakha in her keynote speech underlined the importance of education in a woman's life and need to make her self-reliant. She appreciated the work Maher Snehabhavan was doing for the uplift of women. Around 40 people attended the function.

At Ratnagiri, the celebration included paying respects to Savitribai Phule. The Maher social workers and children remembered Savitribai's contribution to the well-being of women and also admired Sister Lucy for taking Savitribai's legacy forward by giving a new lease of life to the hundreds of abandoned and destitute women.

At Satara, two representatives of the Crane company, Neha Karlekar and Vinayak Arekar, visited Maher and addressed the Maherites on the empowerment of women.

Holi celebration, Mumbai, Ratnagiri (10 March)

It was all fun for the Maher Neev children who celebrated Holi with great fervor and enthusiasm. It made a very happy sight seeing them splashing water and colour on each other.

At Ranagiri, children lit a bonfire of waste material collected from the surroundings. Symbolically they burnt and destroyed their bad habits in that bonfire.

Good Friday, Mumbai (10 April)

Neev Home children celebrated the day by keeping a fast which concluded with all children and staff praying together. This was followed by a special dinner.

Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Jayanti, Ratnagiri, Kendur, Shirur (11 April 2020)

On the occasion, the children and the staff paid Jyotiba Phule their deep respects and resolved to follow his teachings. They also resolved to observe social distancing, wear face covering and cooperate with the government in observing lockdown rules. The Jayanti featured a drawing competition for children.

Ambedkar Jayanti, Mumbai, Ratnagiri, Satara, Pune (14 April)

In a meeting on the day, children were told about the life and mission of Dr. Ambedkar, the father of the Indian constitution, leader of the underprivileged and one of India's highly acclaimed intellectuals.

In Ratnagiri, children paid tributes to Dr Ambedkar by praying continuously for two hours. The centre received on the occasion a donation from Maher well-wisher Mr Santosh Ayer.

The Jayanti was also observed at Satara where children spoke about Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's work regarding his struggle against social injustice and the evil of the caste system.

World Book Day, Satara, Aпти, Shirur (23 April)

The World Book Day is an annual event organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to promote reading, publishing, and copyright. It is noteworthy that Maher workers noted this day and made it a point to observe it involving Maher children and bringing to their notice the importance of books in our life.

The function was organised by Maher at Karandwadi in Satara. Mr. Sandip Mhetre underlined on the occasion the importance of books in our life but regretted that in the internet age, the reading habit had taken a back seat. Pointing out that all great people adopted books to communicate their thoughts to people, he appealed to the children to resolve to form the habit of reading books on the World book Day and enrich their life with the knowledge and information contained within them.



Earth Day, Mumbai, Satara, Vadhu, Awalwadi (25th April)

Earth Day is an annual event celebrated around the world on April 22nd to demonstrate support for environmental protection. First celebrated in 1970, it now includes events coordinated globally by the Earth Day Network in more than 193 countries. The Neev Home children joined the celebration by making earth paintings and praying together.

At Satara, Ms Yogita Mhetre underlined the importance of preserving air, trees and water which we get free from our beloved mother earth and for which we should always be grateful to her.

The meeting also expressed gratitude to the doctors, nurses and other health professionals who had risked their life and were doing their best to stop the spread of the deadly coronavirus.

Worker's Day, Bijupara ,Avalwadi (1 May)

International Workers' Day, also known as Labour Day or May Day, is a celebration of the working classes, initiated by the international labour movement to attract public attention to and focus the problems of workers. In Bijupara a gathering of Maher children was held to inform them about the workers' issues and to express gratitude towards them for their contribution to the well-being of the society. Children mentioned on the occasion the work being done by Maher workers for their welfare and expressed gratefulness to Sister Lucy for leading the team of Maher workers so ably to fulfil her mission. The programme featured a street play performed by the Maher children that highlighted the conditions of workers.

Buddha Pournima, Mumbai, Ratnagiri, Pune (7 May)

Neev Home children observed Buddha Pournima by attending a session on Buddha's life journey and his teachings. Suryaprakash made Buddha's painting which added to the solemnity and serenity of the occasion. The children paid their respects through collective praying.

Prayer was also conducted and respects to Gautam Buddha paid at Ratnagiri by the children and the staff of the Maher Ratnagiri centre.



Mother's Day, Vadhu, Mumbai, Bijupara , Pune (10 May)

The Mother's Day is celebrated all over the world to honour the mother of the family, as well as motherhood, maternal bonds, and the influence of mothers in society.

The celebration of Maher at Vadhu was presided over by Sr. Lucy and Hiratai who underlined the importance of sanskaras in developing one's personality. In her speech, Sr. Lucy pointed out that Maher looks after not only the academic progress of its children but their emotional development as well. Children expressed their deep sense of gratitude toward their mother including the housemothers at Maher.

A cake was cut in celebration of the day at the hands of Sr. Lucy. In Mumbai, the Neev Home children also celebrated the day by



making a poster and praying together.

At Bijupara, children gathered to pay their respects to their mother. It made the atmosphere emotional since many of Maher children have never enjoyed a mother's love. Children also paid their respects to Sr. Lucy for all that she was doing for them.

Eid, Mumbai, Bijupara, Satara, Miraj, Pune (25 May)

Eid ul-fitr, religious holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide, was also observed by Neev Home children who drew a rangoli and prayed together irrespective of their own faith.

At Bijupara, the Eid was jointly celebrated by the children of Snehalaya, Tara Home and Shanti Niketan Women's Home. Mr. Francis Minz explained at the gettogether the meaning of Ramadan which was to express thanks to Allah for giving Muslims the courage to observe fast for the entire month of Ramadan.

At Ratnagiri, children wished Eid Mubarak to each other and offered their prayers on the occasion. Project Director, Mr Sunil Kamble explained to children the importance of *sarvadharmasamabhav* and of celebrating the festivals of all religions at Maher. The significance of Ramjan Eid was also explained to the children as a part of the celebration.

At Satara, children recited a prayer and resolved to work for the social harmony. They embraced each other and enjoyed the delicious shirkhurma together.

At Maher Vishwadeep, Miraj, children celebrated Eid by conducting a group prayer for the benefit of the health workers and police.

World Environment Day, Ratnagiri, Satara, Miraj (5th June):

The World Environment Day, initiated by the United Nations to promote the awareness and action for the protection of the environment is celebrated every year on 5th June. As part of the celebration, the children at the Ratnagiri centre arranged a march from the Samarth Nagar to Nivli Phata. The participating children carried hand boards with such slogans as "Zade Lava, Zade Jagava" and "Pradushan Tala, Paryavaran Vachava". The march

concluded with the planting of 20 trees in the Maher premises.

At Satara, Ms Yogita Mhetre underlined the importance of preserving trees and protecting the environment. She bemoaned the increasing pollution and tree felling resulting from growing construction activity and urbanisation. She also mentioned the Chipko Movement and how it had led to creation of the public awareness about the environment.

On the occasion children planted saplings in the pots as a symbolic gesture.

At Miraj, children planted medicinal and fruit saplings withn Maher premises.

International Yoga Day, Mumbai, Ratnagiri, Satara, Miraj , Pune (21st June)

The International Day of Yoga has been celebrated annually on 21st June since 2015, following its inception in the United Nations General Assembly in 2014. The children of the Neev Home observed the day under the guidance of the TSS instructor who gave them information regarding various yoga postures and their benefits.

At Ratnagiri, the children and the mentally disturbed women did various yoga postures under the guidance of Mr. Sunil Kamble. They were also given information about the role of yoga and diet in maintaining one's health. The present focus is to keep everyone protected from the coronavirus. This is a difficult period but we do hope it will soon pass away.


At Satara, Ms Yogita Mhetre explained the purpose behind observing the International Yoga Day. She pointed out that the meditation and yoga had proved to be a very effective way to ward off many health disorders and asked the children to perform them regularly. She further said that the importance of yoga had been recognised internationally, particularly with regard to mental relaxation and concentration of mind.

At Miraj, children and women performed yogasanas right at 6am and were addressed by Mr. Abhijit Kamble on the importance of yoga in life.



Maher Warm Morning

Dawn of InterSpirituality
GLOBAL INTERFAITH PRAYER for HEALING
Featuring Women Spiritual Leaders
May 19, 2020: Online 8 – 10 am PDT



~ Join a global circle of Women Spiritual Leaders in prayer ~

Dawn of InterSpirituality
GLOBAL INTERFAITH PRAYER for HEALING
Featuring Young Adult Spiritual Leaders
May 26, 2020: Online 8 – 10 am PDT



~ Join a global circle of Young Adult Spiritual Leaders in prayer ~

Everyone warmly welcome!
Free of charge. Attend any or all online sessions.

We are honored and enthused to announce that our Maher Founder Director Sr.LucyKurien got selected as a Women spiritual leader and our Maher Boy Mangesh Pol got selected as a young Spiritual Leader to present the Global Interfaith Prayer for Healing .

Would you like to help?

Sr. No.	Particulars	No. Of items	Appx.Cost Rupees	In Euros € @ 88 Approx.	In US \$ @ 75 Approx.	In GBP £ @Rs.97/-
1	Office Chairs & Tables	20	120000	1364	1600	1237
2	Small Cupboards	4	20000	227	267	206
3	Ceiling Fan	40	60000	682	800	619
4	Big Cooker	2	6000	68	80	62
5	Mixer	2	10000	114	133	103
6	Inverter & Batteries	2	100000	1136	1333	1031
7	Solar System for Heating Water	1	150000	1705	2000	1546
8	Food Grain Containers	25	125000	1420	1667	1289
9	Printer cum Xerox	2	80000	909	1067	825
10	Ambulance	2	2800000	31818	37333	28866
11	Iron Boxes	10	16000	182	213	165

Bank Details - For People Abroad:

Maher, Saving Account No: 0261101061493
 Swift Code: CNRBINBBBID,
 Canara Bank, Deep Heights, Nagar Road,
 Ramwadi, Pune 411014,
 Maharashtra, India.

For People in India:

Maher, S.B. Account No: 034104000033202
 IDBI Bank Ltd, Hermes Waves,
 Grnd Floor Kalyani Nagar,
 Pune - 411006, Maharashtra, India.

IFSC: IBKL0000034
PAN NO.: AABTM1421G

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