

Prayas Trust

A Women Led Social Arm of L&T

PRAYAS TIMES

The joy of giving back

Volume 7, Issue 1

August 2025

LIGHTING THE FUTURE





Mrs. Meena Subrahmanyan
President - Prayas Trust

Restoring smiles, opening eyes, empowering lives

Every life has a story, some penned in opportunity, others in quiet struggle. At Prayas Trust, our calling is to help rewrite these stories with hope, dignity, and the courage to dream again. This year, I have been deeply moved by the transformations blooming across our communities, each reminding me that even the smallest act can send ripples of change far into the future.

Through our Smile Project, we have given children more than braces, we have given them the courage to meet the world with a lifted chin and an unguarded smile. What begins as dental care blossoms into confidence, shaping futures in ways that cannot be measured by mirrors alone.

In the sunlit hamlets of Chengalpet, our Smart & Integrated Village Development initiative is proof that rural transformation is not built only with bricks and roads. It is found in a child eager to learn in a smart classroom, in a farmer tending his fields with sustainable wisdom, in a woman bringing home her first independent income. Here, change is quiet, but it runs deep.

Our self-defence programmes for young women have planted seeds of courage. Each stance they take is not just a move of strength, but a declaration of self-worth, a quiet vow that they will walk this world with confidence, voice, and choice.

And then there is the gift of sight. In partnership with Sankara Nethralaya and Aravind Eye Hospital, our eye-care camps have brought clarity to hundreds who once lived in a haze. I will always remember the elderly gentleman who, after cataract surgery, whispered: "I can now see my grandchildren's faces clearly again." Sight, we realise, is not just vision, it is love, independence, and the return of life's colours.

I am proud to acknowledge the tireless commitment of our Prayas affiliates nationwide. From bustling cities to remote villages, they are lighting paths through education, healthcare, women's empowerment, and community development. Their compassion and commitment carry the spirit of Prayas far beyond Chennai, proving that our mission has no borders.

As we move forward, let us remember that real change rarely arrives with fanfare. It is woven, patiently and persistently, through countless small acts of care and belief until together, they transform lives and futures.

This is our journey at Prayas Trust. Shall we walk it together through these pages?

A journey towards holistic rural transformation

In the sun-dappled lanes of Chengalpet's hamlets, a quiet revolution is taking shape. It's not marked by grand gestures or fanfare, but by schoolchildren returning to class with excitement, mothers planting kitchen gardens, and elders regaining their eyesight after years of blurred vision. This transformation is being driven by the Smart & Integrated Village Development (SIVD) initiative, a flagship CSR effort of L&T's Prayas Trust in partnership with Hand in Hand India.

Rooted in L&T's CSR vision of 'Building India's Social Infrastructure', the project began its second phase in 2024 with a mission to deepen its impact. With operations expanding across 19 hamlets in Lathur and Thirukazukundram blocks of Tamil Nadu's Chengalpet district, SIVD is transforming the lives of over 10,500 beneficiaries, with women forming the lion's share of this demographic.

At its core, the project adopts a multi-dimensional approach to rural empowerment, targeting education, health, women's livelihoods, sanitation, sustainable waste management (SWM), and natural resource management (NRM). Each intervention is designed not just as a service, but as a foundation for self-reliance and long-term sustainability.

Education: more than just learning

In a region where dropping out of school was once common place due to lack of quality education, lack of basic school infrastructure, lack of drinking water and sanitation facilities, the SIVD initiative has flipped the narrative. From smart classrooms to remedial coaching and vibrant play areas, the goal has been simple, to create environments that make children want to learn while also participating in extracurricular activities.

“The smart classroom has been a game-changer, children who had been absent for long are back, and learning has become something they look forward to.”
Ms. Janaki
Headmistress Thondamanallur Panchayat Union Middle School.



Further, School Management Committees (SMCs) have been empowered through targeted training covering child rights, POCSO awareness, and safe school practices.





Equipping young learners with spoken english kits

“ We now know how to plan, protect, and advocate for our children ”

Ms. Amsa
SMC member from
Pekkaranai, beaming
with confidence.



Health: from early intervention to lasting wellness

Access to healthcare can be a life-changing gift in remote areas, and SIVD has made it more accessible than ever. Through 14 general and 5 specialist medical camps, over 2,000 villagers received crucial medical attention, including free spectacles and cataract surgeries.

“ After struggling for six months, I can see again and work again. This help came at just the right time. ”

Mrs. Aarayi,
a daily wage worker
from Kalkulam.



Caring for the community - consultation in progress

The women exclusive anemia control program screened over 700 women, of whom 467 were identified as anemic. With focused counselling, supplements, dietary interventions including nurturing kitchen gardens recovery stories emerged.



“ From being unable to stand for long to feeling energetic again, my hemoglobin improved from 4.8 to 13.1 g/dL. I feel reborn ”
Mrs. Ambika
a 50-year-old labourer.



Spreading awareness through anemia prevention campaign

Battling Lifestyle Diseases

With non-communicable diseases (NCDs) on the rise, SIVD screened 4,376 villagers for diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular risks, referring high-risk individuals for timely care. Awareness campaigns and IEC outreach touched over 1,000 villagers, reinforcing the value of early detection and lifestyle changes.



Non communicable disease screening in progress



Empowering Women, Enabling Livelihoods

Skill-building workshops and Self-Help Group (SHG) empowerment sessions have enabled over 7,300 women to gain not just livelihoods but confidence and agility. The transformation is visible in income generation, community participation and renewed self-worth.

Promoting Greener Villages through Sustainable Waste Management & Natural Resource Management

Environmental sustainability is a crucial pillar of rural development, ensuring communities flourish while conserving resources for future generations. Recognizing this, SIVD Phase II embedded Sustainable Waste Management (SWM) and Natural Resource Management (NRM) into its rural transformation blueprint.

These programmes aim to minimize pollution, improve public health, promote recycling and resource recovery, enhance resilience to climate change and strengthen sustainable rural livelihoods

Natural Resource Management

As part of this initiative, activities focused on agricultural sustainability and livestock health. Veterinary camps in Nelvoy, Vadakkuvayalur, and Thondamanallur provided deworming, all injections, vaccinations, and mineral mixtures, benefitting 1,000+ bovines.

Additionally 11,500+ CO-5 fodder slips were distributed and training sessions on organic farming, composting, natural pest control, and soil health management were conducted. Farmers were introduced to organic inputs such as Panchakavya, fish amino acid, and Jeevamirtham through expert-led demonstrations.

Solid Waste Management

In five Panchayats — Vadakkuvayalur, Nelvoy, Kilapakkam, Kalkulam, and Thondamanallur, the project conducted stakeholder meetings aligning local leaders with the cause, launched door-to-door awareness drives reaching 4,000+ villagers, disseminated IEC materials supporting responsible waste disposal practices and trained waste management officials and sanitation workers, ensuring grassroots-level execution and behavioral change.

Through these integrated efforts, SIVD Phase II is shaping cleaner, greener, and more resilient villages, addressing current environmental challenges while safeguarding ecological balance for the future.

Early Childhood Matters

Development begins at birth. Over 300 parents were trained in nutrition, hygiene, emotional care, and early education to support healthier childhoods and a stronger foundation for learning.

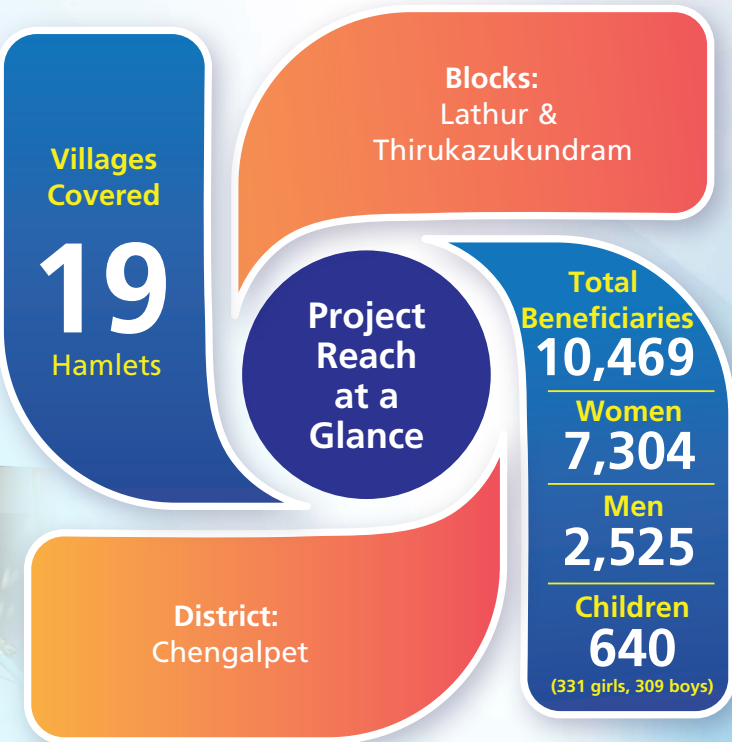
A Model for Rural India

Whether it's a child eager to attend class, a woman standing tall with new skills, or an elder returning home after vision-restoring surgery, the Smart & Integrated Village Development project is rewriting the story of rural India, one empowered village at a time.

In doing so, it reminds us that true progress is not just about building infrastructure, but about building lives with dignity, opportunity, and hope.



Renovated Anganwadi at Thondamanallur village, Chengalpet district



Thrust-wise reach



Drinking Water Facility (100LPH RO) at panchayat union primary school-Vadakkuvayalur, Chengalpet District

Bringing hope to Thoothukudi's coastal communities

In the rhythm of waves and the scent of salt, life in Thoothukudi has long tested the resilience of its people, especially its fishing community and salt pan workers. Amidst the hardship, a quiet but powerful dream continued to grow — the dream of a better tomorrow for their children.

That dream has now taken shape in brick, colour and care.

In partnership with the Thoothukudi Municipal Corporation, Prayas Trust has constructed two new Model Anganwadi Centres, one in Therespuram and the other in Ambedkar Nagar

Each centre can accommodate 25 children and support around 90 women, including pregnant women, adolescent girls, and young mothers in the neighborhood. The centres are equipped with child-friendly classrooms, a kitchen, separate toilet facilities, and safe play areas. Vibrant wall murals and age-appropriate furniture create an atmosphere that encourages both joy and curiosity.

To ensure the safety and hygiene of the children and staff, LPG connections, kitchen platforms, and smoke-free cooking facilities have been provided. The child-friendly toilets have been specially designed to encourage early toilet training, along with reliable water facilities.





“An Anganwadi is often the first window to the world for a child, It is where the seeds of health, nutrition, and early learning are sown. For the mothers of this community, it is also a space of support and dignity. We are honoured to have been able to play a small part in making this possible.

Mrs. Meena Subrahmanyam
President of Prayas Trust

The Therespuram Anganwadi, located right across from the salt pans, will primarily serve the families of salt pan workers and fisherfolk. The Ambedkar Nagar centre too is hope for underserved families who now have a trusted, accessible space for childcare and maternal health services.

“

When we received a request from the Tamil Nadu government in September 2024 to support these centres, we knew we had to act quickly and meaningfully, These Anganwadis are more than buildings. They're symbols of what can happen when government and civil society work hand in hand for community wellbeing.

”



Mrs. Beena Sajit
Secretary of Prayas Trust

“When we received a request from the Tamil Nadu government in September 2024 to support these centres, we knew we had to act quickly and meaningfully,” said Mrs. Beena Sajit, Secretary of Prayas Trust. “These Anganwadis are more than buildings. They're symbols of what can happen when government and civil society work hand in hand for community wellbeing”.

Constructed at a total cost of ₹42 lakhs, both centres were fully funded by Prayas Trust and built through a local civil contractor engaged by the Trust itself. The project was executed with careful attention to inclusivity, sustainability, and long-term impact.

The inauguration ceremony was graced by the Honourable Minister for Social Welfare and Women Empowerment,



Ms. P. Geetha Jeevan, along with Mrs. Meena Subrahmanyam, Collector K. Elambahavath, Corporation Commissioner L. Madhubalan, and Revenue Divisional Officer M. Prabhu, among others.

As the walls of the new Anganwadis come alive with color and children's laughter, a quiet transformation has begun. Not just of early childhood care, but of community confidence.

Because at Prayas Trust, every step is for someone's tomorrow.





Joy and learning at summer camp 2025

Prayas Trust organised an engaging Summer Camp for children in Chennai from 21st April to 9th May 2025. Conducted through the innovative Mobile Toy Van (MTV) project in association with Children Toy Foundation (CTF) at the Prayas Tuition Centre, the camp offered a vibrant mix of learning and fun.

Designed for children aged 6 to 12 years, the initiative benefitted around 50 young learners. Dedicated MTV educators led a variety of enriching activities, including educational games that encouraged learning through play, creative art and craft sessions, lively dance workshops, captivating storytelling, and modules on holistic personality development.



Over the three weeks, participants showed marked improvement in listening skills, focus, and confidence. The camp concluded with spirited performances by the children, showcasing their singing, dancing, and sharing of personal camp experiences.

The closing ceremony was graced by Prayas Trust dignitaries Beena Sajit, Secretary, Radhai Veerappan Trustee & In-charge of Prayas Medical Centre, and Gagandeep Kaur, Treasurer who presented certificates of participation, refreshments, and a small memento to each child, celebrating their enthusiasm, creativity, and growth.

Supporting education for a better future

Prayas Trust continues to prioritise education by extending financial assistance to children of employees and students from economically weaker communities. The initiative covers children of Prayas Medical Centre staff with at least three years of service, L&T staff with five years of service, as well as underprivileged students from the wider community.

For the 2025–26 academic year, following a process of background verification and evaluation, 135 applications were approved.

The financial support was formally extended at a cheque distribution ceremony held at Prayas Medical Centre, attended by parents, children, and members of the Trust. Cheques were handed over by Mrs. Meena Subrahmanyam, President of Prayas Trust, along with other trustees.

Addressing the gathering, Trustee Mrs. Radhai Veerappan outlined the processes behind the programme and highlighted the Trust's commitment to making education accessible.



Parents and students expressed their gratitude, noting that the support helps ease financial strain and ensures continuity in education. By carefully reviewing applications and disbursing aid, Prayas Trust is enabling children to pursue their studies while supporting families who place strong value on education despite financial challenges.

Empowering through Scholarship Programmes

Prayas Trust continues to strengthen its commitment to education through its Merit Scholarship Programme, extending vital financial assistance to deserving students. In its recent initiative, 18 students from the 10th and 12th standards were awarded scholarships to support their academic journey. The programme is designed to ease the financial burden on students and their families, allowing them to concentrate fully on their studies. By investing in education, Prayas Trust is not only fostering academic excellence but also empowering young minds to realise their potential.



Restoring smiles, building confidence

Prayas Trust, Chennai in collaboration with Shriram Finance Ltd. launched a heartwarming initiative, the Smile Project. Its mission was to help underprivileged students from Government and Government-aided schools in Chennai access treatment that is often out of reach especially dental braces.

Many children with dental alignment issues face not only health challenges but also a dip in self-esteem. Braces can make a world of difference, but the cost places them beyond the reach of most low-income families. The Smile Project seeks to bridge that gap, enabling students to smile and live with confidence.

The project began with dental screenings at several schools near the Prayas Medical Centre in Virugambakkam. Four schools partnered with Prayas for this initiative. On 20 January 2025, the lot of first student received their braces, marking the start of a journey toward healthier, more confident smiles. Over time, 14 students have benefitted from the initiative, each receiving ongoing care and follow-up to ensure their treatment is progressing well.

This initiative could not have been executed successfully without Dr.Praveen Kumar, Consultant Orthodontist.

The transformation has been remarkable as the students now speak and smile more openly, their self-assurance visibly growing. "I used to feel shy while talking to my friends," shared one beneficiary. "Now I smile without thinking twice."

The Smile Project is more than dental care, it's about restoring dignity, encouraging self-expression, and unlocking the confidence every child deserves.



Breathing easier

Recognising the growing impact of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Prayas Trust organised an awareness programme to educate the community about early detection, prevention, and management of this chronic lung condition.

The session was led by Lakshmanan, Breathfree Educator and Manager at CIPLA, who explained that COPD includes conditions such as emphysema and chronic bronchitis, with the primary symptom being persistent difficulty in breathing. He emphasised that early diagnosis is vital to slow the progression of the disease and protect lung health. "If you experience increased shortness of breath, frequent coughing, wheezing, chest tightness, or unusual tiredness, consult a healthcare provider immediately," he urged.

Lakshmanan also demonstrated effective breathing exercises and the correct way to use an inhaler, helping participants understand how to manage symptoms and improve quality of life.

This informative session benefitted 28 participants, 11 men and 17 women, equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to take proactive steps toward better respiratory health.

By spreading awareness, Prayas Trust aims to ensure that more people can breathe easier, live healthier, and recognise that early action can make all the difference.



Empowering mothers, nourishing futures



Prayas Medical Centre, Chennai organised an interactive awareness session on the importance of breastfeeding, led by Dr. Sreevidya along with Dr. Ayesha, an expert in maternal and child health. The talk highlighted how breastfeeding offers essential nutrition and immunity-boosting benefits for infants while supporting recovery and emotional well-being for mothers.

To make the session more engaging, Dr. Ayesha used charts and a display of nutritious foods to explain what mothers should include in their diet for their own health and their baby's development. The session drew 24 new and lactating mothers, who actively participated, asked questions, and clarified doubts on nutrition, breastfeeding techniques, and newborn care. Members of Prayas Trust and Anganwadi teachers of Zone 10 were also present to support the initiative.

By empowering mothers with knowledge and practical tips, Prayas Medical Centre continues to foster healthier beginnings, one mother, one baby, and one confident step at a time.



Opening eyes to a brighter future

For many in Chennai's underprivileged communities, poor eyesight is a silent burden. Blurred vision makes everyday tasks harder, limits opportunities, and slowly erodes confidence. The solution is often simple, a check-up, a pair of glasses, or timely treatment but for families struggling to make ends meet, even this is out of reach.

In January and February 2025, Prayas Trust, Chennai set out to change that. Partnering with two of the city's most respected eye care institutions, Sankara Nethralaya and Aravind Eye Hospital, the Trust organised two mega free eye camps designed to reach those who need care the most.

The first camp, held at Narayana Babu School in Virugambakkam, welcomed 270 people from nearby low-income neighbourhoods. The second, conducted in Thirukandalam in collaboration with Manonmani Trust, a local NGO known for its social welfare work, reached 171 beneficiaries. Manonmani Trust's community network ensured that even the most isolated residents came forward to get their eyes checked.



Bringing vision care closer to community
Community Eye Camps

Each camp offered thorough examinations by qualified ophthalmologists, immediate diagnosis of eye conditions, and on-the-spot referrals for further treatment. Patients with serious conditions such as cataracts were linked directly to Sankara Nethralaya and Aravind Eye Hospital for surgeries and specialised care often at no cost.

For many, it was a life-changing experience. "I had been living with blurry vision for years," said one beneficiary. "Now I know there is hope, and I am getting the treatment I need."

By the end of both camps, 441 people had been helped, some receiving their first ever eye examination, others finally getting a path to treatment that had long seemed impossible. "Clear vision changes everything it brings back independence, dignity, and confidence," says Mrs. Meena Subrahmanyam, President Prayas Trust. "Through our mega camps, we have definitely restored hope, showing that every community deserves the chance to see a brighter tomorrow."



Bringing back the gift of sight
through free cataract surgeries

Medical camp brings vital healthcare to Pattinapakkam residents



Prayas Medical Centre, in collaboration with Dr. Priya (General Physician) and Dr. Gopikrishna (Dermatologist), conducted a successful free medical camp in Pattinapakkam, Chennai. The initiative aimed to bridge healthcare access gaps and provide essential medical services to underserved residents.

Over 103 individuals benefitted from the camp, receiving consultations, basic screenings, and medical guidance. Several cases of high blood pressure, diabetes, and severe skin infections were identified during the check-ups. Patients with serious conditions were referred to the Government Hospital for further diagnosis and treatment, ensuring continuity of care.

The camp not only addressed immediate health concerns but also highlighted the pressing need for regular medical outreach in the area. This initiative reaffirmed Prayas Medical Centre's commitment to community well-being and preventive healthcare.



Health screening camp benefits over 300 students

Prayas Trust conducted a vital health screening camp at Government Boys High School, Mogappair East, Chennai. The initiative reached 304 students, offering essential check-ups across key areas such as eye, dental, ENT and skin health. The screening revealed several underlying health issues, highlighting the critical need for regular health assessments among school-going children, especially those with limited access to healthcare.

Students requiring further attention were referred to the Prayas Medical Centre for detailed evaluation and treatment.

This structured follow-up ensures the screenings translate into meaningful care, reinforcing Prayas Trust's ongoing commitment to the health and well-being of children in the community.



Mayor joins hands with Prayas to promote community health

Prayas Trust organised a General Medical Camp at Kalyanapuram, Vyasarpadi, delivering essential healthcare services to residents of the locality. The camp saw an encouraging response, with 206 beneficiaries availing medical consultations and treatment, including 161 women and 45 men.

A notable moment during the event was the visit of Mrs. Priya Rajan, Mayor of Chennai, who took time to engage with the community and observe the work being done. She also felicitated the team from Prayas Trust, recognizing their dedication and ongoing efforts to support underserved communities.

The Mayor's presence and appreciation highlighted the significance of such community-based health initiatives. By bringing accessible medical care to the doorstep of vulnerable populations, Prayas Trust continues to play a vital role in improving public health in areas like Kalyanapuram.



Bringing Healthcare closer

Nestled in Eachanari, near the L&T Coimbatore Campus at Malumichampatti, the Larsen & Toubro Coimbatore Health Centre has been a vital lifeline for the local community since its inception in January 2012. As part of the Aarogya healthcare initiative of the L&T Public Charitable Trust, the Centre has been offering accessible and affordable primary healthcare services to the underprivileged sections of society, especially the residents of Madukkarai Block and the southern zones of the Coimbatore Corporation.

In November 2024, the management of the Health Centre was entrusted to Prayas Trust, the women-led social initiative of L&T. This transition marked a new phase in community engagement and outreach, with a renewed focus on inclusivity and continuity of care.

The Medical Centre operates as a comprehensive primary care facility with a strong emphasis on affordability, quality, and accessibility. It is led by a full-time Medical Officer and supported by part-time doctors and consulting specialists in gynecology, pediatrics, ENT, dermatology, and dentistry, available on specific days. A professionally trained counselor is also available to offer guidance in nutrition, reproductive health, and psycho-social wellbeing.

A clinical laboratory attached to the Centre conducts 30 different tests at nominal charges, helping ensure timely diagnosis and follow-up care. Eye care is also made accessible through a dedicated Vision Centre managed by Aravind Eye Care Hospital, offering comprehensive examinations and primary eye services at low cost.

The Centre also hosts a Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendra, enabling access to quality generic medicines either free of cost or at highly affordable rates. Routine



immunizations are provided in partnership with the local Government Primary Health Centre, covering antenatal mothers and children to promote preventive healthcare practices.

To extend its reach further, the Centre operates Mobile Medical Units that deliver free outpatient care across 34 villages surrounding the campus. These outreach efforts are bolstered by periodic awareness sessions on nutrition, childcare, and hygiene, ensuring that health education goes hand in hand with service delivery.

Each year, the PMC Coimbatore provides primary care to nearly 30,000 individuals. Additionally, the mobile health clinics, operated in collaboration with NGP Partners WESTRIC Trust and Hand in Hand India, serve another 40,000 people, bringing quality care directly to the community.



Prayas Trust Tejasvi

Skills, support and social awareness

In Coimbatore, Prayas Trust Tejasvi continues to make a meaningful impact through a series of thoughtful initiatives aimed at empowering young girls, supporting schools, promoting sustainable livelihoods for women, and fostering responsible digital behavior among students. Each activity reflects a deep commitment to creating opportunities, strengthening communities, and addressing real needs with practical solutions.



One such initiative is the hand embroidery certificate course introduced for 20 girl students from grades 6 to 8 at Vellalore Government School. Over a period of six months, the girls were trained in the basics of hand embroidery, learning through practical, hands-on sessions that combined creativity with sustainability. By upcycling fabric and completing personal creative projects, the students not only gained a valuable vocational skill but also a sense of confidence. The course culminated in a vibrant felicitation ceremony where the students proudly displayed hand-embroidered portraits of national leaders. What began as simple curiosity transformed into skilled craftsmanship. The growing interest in textile arts among the students led the school to commit to offering an intermediate-level embroidery course, further nurturing their talents.



Creating a strong foundation for education also means improving the physical learning environment. At CSI Government School in Podanur, Prayas Tejaswi provided essential infrastructure support to create a more conducive space for learning. Study tables and chairs were supplied to improve classroom focus and comfort. In addition, the renovation of school washrooms addressed hygiene concerns, enhancing the safety and dignity of students. These changes have made a noticeable difference in the overall atmosphere, making the school environment cleaner, more organized, and better equipped to support quality education.



Empowerment extended beyond the classroom to the community through the Tejasvi Tailoring Institute located on Vellalore Road. This six-month garment stitching training program is helping women transform skills into sustainable livelihoods. In the second batch, 7 out of 20 trainees secured jobs in the export garment sector, while others began earning through home-based entrepreneurial work. Their commitment to community service was evident when they stitched uniforms for 18 children at Sathya Jeevan Home. The following batches continued this spirit of giving. Old sarees were creatively repurposed into frocks for 24 children for Pongal, and 60 Jablas and 60 nighties were stitched and donated to 30 new mothers at the Coimbatore Government Hospital on Christmas Eve. These acts of kindness highlight how skill development can also lead to compassion, community engagement, and local economic growth.



In a digital age where screen time among students is a growing concern, an awareness programme on mobile addiction and social media was conducted by the Podanur Police at Vellalore Government School. Aimed at older students, the session used interactive discussions, real-life case studies, and visual presentations to highlight the psychological, physical, and academic consequences of excessive mobile phone use. The initiative struck a chord with many students who reflected on their own habits and pledged to make more mindful choices. It marked an important step towards promoting digital responsibility and healthy technology use among the youth.

Prayas Trust Ujala

Empowering youth through health and safety

Prayas Trust Ujala has long believed that true empowerment begins with well-being, both physical and mental. In keeping with this vision, the Trust recently spearheaded two impactful initiatives in Visakhapatnam: a comprehensive health camp for children at Ashreya School in Arilova and a self-defence training program for girls at ZP High School in Gopalapatnam. Together, these programmes reflect a deeply rooted commitment to nurturing healthier, safer, and more confident futures for underserved children.

On February 13, 2025, a health camp was conducted at Ashreya School, located in the heart of Arilova's low-income urban slum. In an area where access to medical care is limited, this intervention was both timely and necessary. A total of 231 students participated in the camp, which offered general health check-ups, dental and ophthalmological screenings, on-site treatment, medication, and engaging health education sessions focused on hygiene and nutrition.



One of the most pressing concerns identified during the camp was the high number of children experiencing indigestion and stomach discomfort. In total, 53 students were diagnosed with digestive issues linked to the regular consumption of junk food and inadequate hand hygiene. The medical team not only provided medication but also took time to educate the students on proper handwashing techniques and the importance of healthy eating habits. Another significant outcome was the early detection of vision problems. Fifteen students were diagnosed with refractive errors and provided with spectacles, enabling them to see more clearly and participate better in school.



The health camp's impact was multifold. Beyond immediate medical relief, it led to greater health awareness among the students, encouraged preventive care and is expected to reduce absenteeism in the long run. It also underscored the importance of regular follow-up camps, involvement of parents and teachers in reinforcing hygiene practices, and the need to improve sanitation and address broader social determinants of health in the community.

While the health camp addressed physical well-being, the self-defence training programme launched by Prayas Trust from July 2024 to March 2025 focused on equipping adolescent girls with confidence, discipline, and crucial safety skills. Held at ZP High School in Gopalapatnam, the program

was designed for students in Classes 8 and 9, integrating weekly training sessions into their school schedule. Sports periods were utilised for daily practice with oversight from the school's physical director to ensure regular participation.

The curriculum was both rigorous and empowering. It covered fundamental and advanced techniques including punches, various kicks, blocks, katas and the use of nunchaku. Beyond the physical aspects, the training instilled values of self-discipline, focus, respect and personal safety, skills that are invaluable in today's social climate.

At the end of the programme, 50 students successfully completed the course and were felicitated in a ceremony attended by their parents, teachers and the school headmaster. Certificates and medals were awarded as symbols of their commitment and progress. Parents expressed deep gratitude to Prayas Trust, noting visible changes in their children's confidence, discipline and outlook. Encouraged by the enthusiastic feedback, Prayas Ujala has planned to conduct special summer classes for students who wish to continue their training.

Together, these two initiatives present a compelling model of community-driven development that addresses both immediate needs and long-term empowerment. The health camp at Ashreya School helped identify and address critical medical issues while fostering preventive habits. The self-defence training at ZP High School gave young girls the tools to protect themselves and build character, all within a supportive school environment.



Prayas Trust Nai Umang

Tailoring hope for tiny lives

Prayas Trust Nai Umang brought a wave of warmth and happiness to Faridabad's slum communities through a thoughtful clothing distribution drive for newborns and their mothers..

The baby clothes, stitched with care and precision, were created by women enrolled in the Prayas tailoring unit. For these students, the drive was an opportunity to translate their classroom training into real-world impact. Many of them, women seeking financial independence and a brighter future, found deep purpose in using their hands and hearts to serve others.

This initiative perfectly reflects Prayas Nai Umang's dual mission of enabling social welfare while empowering women with marketable skills. By providing free tailoring education, the Trust fosters economic self-reliance. And through acts like this, it closes the circle, empowered women giving back to society in meaningful ways.

The joy in the mothers' eyes and the comfort extended to their little ones serve as powerful reminders that small acts, when driven by compassion and skill, can create lasting change. One stitch at a time, Nai Umang is not just transforming fabric, but lives.



Prayas Trust Shraddha

Sewing a new beginning

Prayas Trust Shraddha has launched a meaningful initiative to empower underprivileged women in Serampore, near Kolkata, by offering certified training in tailoring and sewing. This livelihood development project is being implemented in partnership with Usha International's Sewing Silai initiative, a programme known for promoting self-reliance through skill-building.

In low-income communities, access to skill development can significantly impact economic independence, especially for women. Tailoring remains a viable vocation due to its low entry barriers and strong potential for home-based or small-scale entrepreneurial ventures. Recognising this, Prayas Shraddha has collaborated with Usha International to equip women with the necessary

skills, tools, and confidence to pursue self-employment.

Under this initiative, 20 women from Serampore have been selected through a structured assessment process. The training is being conducted in a space provided by the Gram Panchayat, reflecting the strong community and institutional support for the programme. Usha International brings to the table a structured curriculum, technical training modules, and continued mentorship.

The course includes three months of certified tailoring training, followed by nine months of handholding support to help the participants transition from learners to earners. Upon completion, the women will receive certificates from Usha, enhancing their credibility and employment prospects. The Panchayat has also committed to supporting these women by facilitating access to government orders, further enabling self-employment and income generation.



This initiative represents a critical step toward inclusive and sustainable livelihood development, transforming skills into opportunities and helping women build a more secure future for themselves and their families.

Prayas Trust Samarth

Lighting minds one book at a time

Prayas Trust Samarth, Vadodara, inaugurated a new library at Pujya Dongreji Maharaj Prathamik Shala, which is now accessible to 574 students.

The event was attended by key dignitaries including Shri Chaitanya Bhai Desai, BJP Member of the Legislative Assembly; Shri Nishidh Bhai Desai, Presiding Officer of the Nagar Prathamik Shikshan Samiti; Smt. Anjana Ben Thakkar, Vice Presiding Officer; and other members of the education committee.



The library is already playing a meaningful role in supporting students’ reading habits and overall learning. Teachers have noted improved vocabulary, better engagement in class, and growing interest in independent learning among students.

This initiative reflects the Trust’s ongoing efforts to create learning-friendly environment and provide students with access to essential educational resources.

Empowering Young Achievers in Vocational Training

Prayas Samarth introduced a ‘Student of the Year’ Examination at its Tailoring Unit, a first-of-its-kind effort to recognise student commitment and growth in vocational training.

The exam was designed to encourage skill development, reward consistent performance, and build confidence among learners. It also aimed to highlight the importance of dedication and practical expertise in vocational education.

The title of ‘Student of the Year’ was awarded along with a sewing machine, a trophy, and a certificate acknowledging both achievement and potential.

This initiative marks a positive step in promoting skill-based learning and reaffirms the Trust’s commitment to supporting the personal and professional development of women in the community.



Prayas Kalpavruksh

Small acts, lasting change

Prayas Kalpavruksh has always been synonymous with work that touches lives in the most fundamental ways. From digging wells and building toilets to supporting education, its projects have brought tangible change to communities. Yet, among all its initiatives, the bond it shares with Mumbai Mobile Creches (MMC) stands apart.



The children of migrant workers, living on remote construction sites, often grow up in conditions of neglect and vulnerability. At these creches, Prayas volunteers step in to create moments of care and learning that these children might otherwise miss. Reaching them is no easy task. The journeys are long, often under the scorching sun or through heavy rains, sometimes without reliable transport. Yet every visit ends in joy and fulfillment, making the effort worthwhile.

In collaboration with MMC, volunteers engage with the children weekly through yoga, art, math, songs, and storytelling. Sensitive subjects such as “Good Touch and Bad Touch” are introduced with care, helping the young ones grow with awareness and confidence. Festivals are made special with the laughter of celebrations on Children’s Day, during Makar Sankranti, and on other occasions when gifts, music, and warmth flow freely.



Strength in Skills, Power in Self-Reliance

At Milind Nagar in Powai, Prayas Kalpavruksh runs a Skill Development Centre that has been changing lives in quiet but powerful ways. Here, women are equipped with practical skills in tailoring and Mehendi art, turning training into empowerment. For many, these skills have opened the door to financial independence, with monthly earnings ranging from four to eight thousand rupees through customer orders.

The learning does not remain confined to the classroom. During Navratri, Mehendi students applied intricate designs for 145 L&T employees at the Landmark office, translating practice into income. They proudly took part in the annual NGO Mela at AMN Tower, where handmade frocks, petticoats, potlis, and clutches were sold, blending entrepreneurship with self-expression. A creative workshop on Dot Mandala added another dimension, resulting in 200 painted tealight holders that drew admiration at the mela.



The spirit of compassion is as strong as the spirit of enterprise. The students stitched and donated jhablas and nighties to a government maternity hospital, ensuring that newborns and new mothers received a touch of comfort and care. Every skill learned at Milind Nagar becomes a step toward self-reliance, and every gesture of kindness becomes a reflection of resilience. Together, these women light a path that leads to empowered communities.



Beyond these initiatives, Prayas Kalpavruksh has extended its reach through many other acts of support. The Digital Room at Aundhe School in Lonavala received a new roof, improved safety through CCTV cameras, and fresh, secure electrical wiring to replace old and risky lines. Nutrition support has been provided to the students there, ensuring that learning is strengthened by good health. A mass wedding ceremony for ten couples from tribal communities brought dignity and joy to families who could not afford such celebrations. Medical care was extended through a camp at the Divine Light School in Andheri, while children of support staff were given stationery kits and umbrellas during the monsoon season, offering them both utility and encouragement.



From shy to strong

Class 9 student K. Nuthana Sri of ZP Girls High School, Gopalapatnam, always loved sports, especially Kabaddi. But low body mass and limited stamina often kept her off the team.

That changed in July 2024, when Prayas Trust, Vizag launched free self-defence training at her school. Out of many applicants, 50 girls were selected and Nuthana made the cut.

"From the first day, I felt this training could change me," says Nuthana. Guided by Suneel Kumar, the programme combined practical techniques with nutritional support, helping girls build both strength and confidence. For Nuthana, the transformation was remarkable: better stamina, sharper focus, and improved academic performance. "Now I feel stronger not physically but mentally as well," she says.

With gratitude to her coach and Prayas Trust, Nuthana stands taller today ready to face challenges with courage and confidence.

Transforming lives through skill training

For 28-year-old P. Maheswari from Maddilapalem, Visakhapatnam, life took a difficult turn after the birth of her two children. Her husband's earnings as a daily wage labourer could barely cover household expenses, let alone her dreams of giving their children a good education. Determined to help, Maheswari took up work in civil construction. But the job was physically exhausting, affected her health, and kept her away from her children for long hours. Reluctantly, she left.

Her turning point came when she learnt about a free tailoring training programme run by Prayas Trust. Overcoming her initial shyness, Maheswari not only completed the basic course but was also selected for an advanced programme in embroidery and saree work. With a small loan, she bought her own sewing machine and began stitching from home.

What started as a trickle of work soon became a steady stream, as her skill and dedication earned her a loyal customer base. Today, Maheswari earns around ₹10,000 a month and is confident about expanding her business further.

"Prayas Trust didn't just teach me a skill, it gave me confidence, respect, and the ability to support my family with dignity," she says with pride.



Sakthi's story of strength, stitch by stitch

When life placed the weight of an entire family on Sakthi's shoulders, she chose not just to carry it but to rise above it. A mother, a survivor, and now an emerging entrepreneur, her journey is marked by quiet determination and unwavering hope.

After her husband abandoned the family, Sakthi took on the role of sole breadwinner. Working as a domestic help in multiple homes, every rupee she earned went into raising her two children. "I've done all kinds of work to keep my family going," she shares. "But I always believed that learning a skill would help me stand on my own feet."

That belief led her to enroll in Prayas Trust's Tailoring Training Centre in Chennai, where she joined the 26th batch. Despite a packed and physically demanding schedule, Sakthi never missed a session. "No matter how tired I was, attending the class gave me strength," she says. "Learning something new each day gave me purpose."

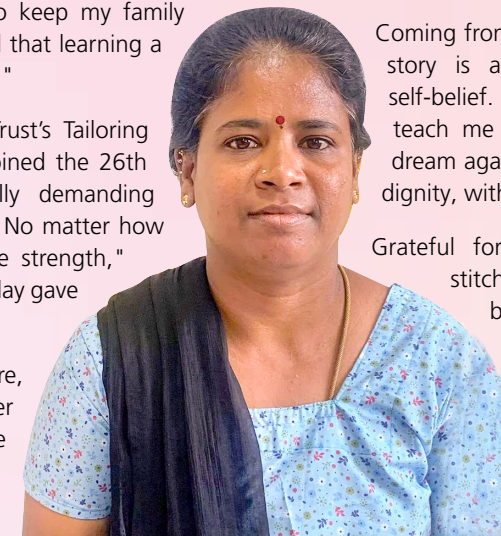
Her hard work is not just for her own future, but for her children's as well. Her elder daughter is a first-generation college graduate, and her younger son is currently

in Class 12. "Their education means everything to me," Sakthi says with pride. "They are my motivation to keep going."

Today, Sakthi has not only mastered the craft of tailoring but also started a home-based business. From blouses to churidars and custom-made garments, she takes orders from her neighborhood and earns a modest yet meaningful income. "This extra income helps me manage our daily expenses better. It's something of my own," she says.

Coming from an underprivileged background, Sakthi's story is a powerful reflection of resilience and self-belief. "The training at Prayas Trust didn't just teach me tailoring. It gave me the confidence to dream again," she says. "Now I know I can live with dignity, without having to rely on anyone else."

Grateful for the opportunity, Sakthi continues to stitch her way forward, thread by thread, dream by dream. "Prayas Trust helped me believe in myself. For that, I will always be thankful."



Thangaraj's life-changing journey of 13 Years

For Thangaraj, a server at a small hotel in Chennai, life took a drastic turn when he was diagnosed with kidney failure 13 years ago. What followed was not just a battle for health but a story of quiet strength, and the unwavering support of Prayas Medical Centre, Chennai.

"For 13 years, I've been coming to Prayas Dialysis Centre for dialysis. It's not just a hospital to me, it's my second home," he says, his voice tinged with emotion.

Despite being a teetotaler, Thangaraj was shocked when doctors traced his kidney failure back to hypertension, a silent and dangerous condition that often goes unnoticed until it's too late. "I didn't drink or smoke. I never imagined something like this could happen to me," he recalls.

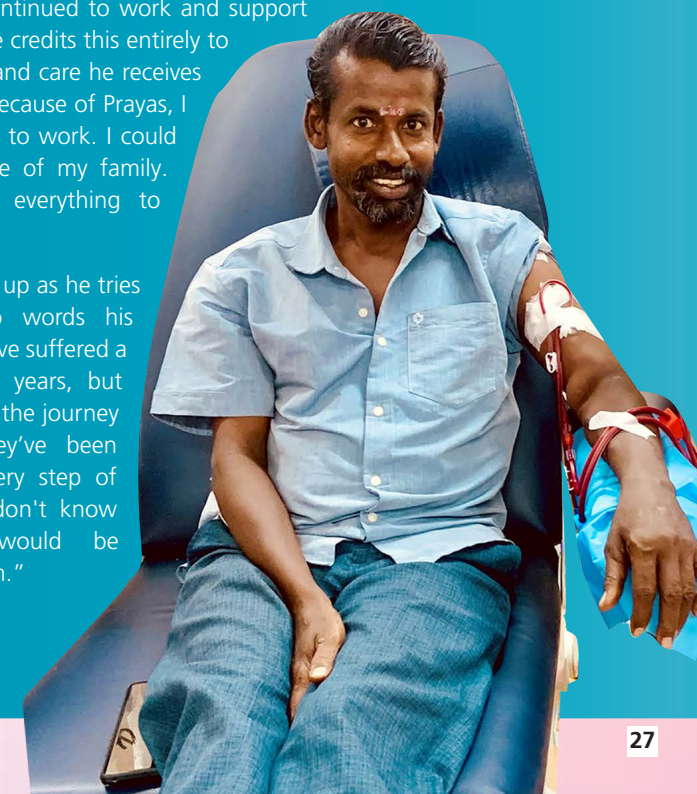
Thangaraj underwent a kidney transplant at a well-known hospital, but the outcome was far from what he hoped. "Even after the transplant, I couldn't get back to normal life. That's when I returned to Prayas," he shares. That return was more than a medical decision. It was a return to trust, compassion, and familiarity.

At Prayas, his journey was met with continuous care, not only through the life-sustaining dialysis but also with a guided approach to his lifestyle. "The doctors and nurses here didn't

just treat me; they taught me how to live better. They gave me a lifestyle plan, and I've been following it ever since."

Even while undergoing dialysis three times a week, Thangaraj continued to work and support his family. He credits this entirely to the stability and care he receives at Prayas. "Because of Prayas, I could still go to work. I could still take care of my family. That means everything to me."

His eyes well up as he tries to put into words his gratitude. "I've suffered a lot over the years, but Prayas made the journey smooth. They've been with me every step of the way. I don't know where I would be without them."



Heartfelt Congratulations!

Mrs. Meena Subrahmanyam, President of Prayas Trust, has been honoured with the Best Social Worker Award by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

This recognition is a proud moment not just for her, but for the entire Prayas team.

It reflects our collective commitment to empowering women and uplifting communities across the state.

Together, we remain inspired to continue creating meaningful and lasting impact.



EDITOR - Vinod Jacob Chacko | **ASSOCIATE EDITOR** - Namitha Jayanarayanan

CONTENT ASSOCIATES - Arulmani Sheryll. X, Prasanth. V

PHOTOGRAPHY - V.S. Natanavelu, R. Saravanan

Edited by the Corporate Communication Department, L&T Construction Headquarters, Manapakkam, Chennai - 600 089. Design and layout by Venture Media Works.

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Management. The contents of this magazine may not be reproduced without the written permission of the Editor. Not for sale.