*Empowering Minds, Transforming Lives...*

BHARATA MATA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
BHARATA MATA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), THRIKKAKARA

# "THE COMMUNIQUE"

*NEWS LETTER OF BHARATA MATA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK*

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***The Communiqué is the monthly newsletter of Bharata Mata School of Social Work, created by MSW students as a student-led initiative. It highlights the extension and outreach activities of the institution, the achievements of the department and students, and reflections from students. The newsletter also provides a summary of important day observances, seminars, webinars, and faculty development programs (FDPs) conducted in the previous month. Through this initiative, we aim to share updates, celebrate accomplishments, and keep everyone informed about the dynamic activities of our school.***

## ORIENTATION ON BHUMI FELLOWSHIP



On 17th June 2025, the Bharata Mata School of Social Work organized an orientation on the Bhumi Fellowship, led by MSW alumna and Assistant Program Manager, Ms. Aleena Mary. Attended by MSW students and faculty, the session introduced the fellowship's mission to transform education through classroom support, structured training, and community engagement. Ms. Aleena shared her personal journey as a Bhumi Fellow, offering valuable insights into the application and interview process, as well as the challenges of working in diverse school settings. She emphasized the importance of passion for social work, adaptability, resilience, and effective communication in creating sustainable impact. The session inspired participants to consider fellowships as meaningful early-career opportunities that align with the values of social work and contribute to community development.

## ROLE OF YOGA IN LIFESTYLE DISEASE MANAGEMENT

On June 20, 2025, the Bharata Mata School of Social Work (BMSSW) organized a special session on the "Role of Yoga in Lifestyle Disease Management" to mark International Yoga Day. Held at the AV Hall of Bharata Mata College, the session featured Dr. T M U Warrier, Chief Medical Officer and Branch Manager of Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala, Ernakulam, as the esteemed resource person. The program aimed to raise awareness among students about the preventive and therapeutic benefits of yoga in managing lifestyle

related diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and stress-induced disorders. Dr. Warrier's address shed light on the harmony between ancient yogic practices and modern healthcare, encouraging holistic health approaches among the youth.



The session offered both theoretical insights and practical relevance, empowering students to understand the scientific and Ayurvedic foundations of yoga. Participants gained a deeper appreciation for how yoga can positively influence physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Emphasizing the importance of integrating yoga into daily routines, the event reinforced wellness education across academic disciplines. By bridging traditional wisdom with contemporary health challenges, the program not only celebrated International Yoga Day but also inspired students to adopt healthier lifestyles for long-term well-being.

## BSW LIFE SKILLS WORKSHOP



From June 17 to 20, 2025, an engaging and transformative four-day Life Skills Workshop was organized by Bluepoint.org for social work trainees. The program was inaugurated by Baby Prabhakaran, CEO of Bluepoint.org, who led participants through interactive sessions aimed at overcoming common professional fears like stage fright and lack of communication. Activities such as self-introductions by birth months, dynamic group tasks, and role-play games fostered team bonding and confidence. Participants were also introduced to the EPIC model of life skills, emphasizing empathy, problem-solving, emotional regulation, communication, and decision-making through fun and thought-provoking tasks.



The following days featured sessions led by resource persons like Soniya and Thomas Sir, focusing on self-awareness, time management, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking. Games like sculpting with human figures, creative machine-building, and age-shifting role plays kept the atmosphere lively while reinforcing learning objectives. A touching activity symbolizing the pain of childbirth helped participants reflect on maternal sacrifices. The workshop concluded with a discussion on applying these life skills with school children through games and skits—highlighting the trainees' readiness to pass on the lessons learned. Overall, the workshop successfully merged fun, learning, and reflection to build essential life competencies.

## PRIDE IN PERSPECTIVE: A SESSION ON LGBTQIA+ SENSITIZATION



On June 26, 2025, the Bharata Mata School of Social Work organized an enlightening sensitization session titled "Pride in Perspective" at the AV Hall, with LGBTQIA+ rights advocate Dr. Soham Biswas as the resource person. The session aimed to promote awareness and respect for gender and sexual diversity, especially among budding social work professionals. Through interactive discussions and factual insights, Dr. Soham Biswas addressed common misconceptions surrounding queer identities and introduced core concepts such as gender identity, biological sex, gender expression, and sexual orientation. The talk also emphasized the importance of the '+' in LGBTQIA+ and explored how intersectional factors like caste, class, and religion further shape the queer experience in India.

The session empowered students to critically examine biases, embrace inclusive practices, and understand their ethical responsibility as future social workers. Practical strategies such as using gender-neutral language, respecting pronouns, and challenging institutional discrimination were shared. The interactive Q&A segment created a safe space for reflection and dialogue, fostering empathy and encouraging personal and professional growth. Overall, the session not only debunked prevailing myths but also laid the foundation for a more inclusive, compassionate, and justice-oriented social work practice.

## WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY



On June 16, 2025, in observance of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, students from Bharata Mata College performed a powerful musical skit at Priyadarshini Hall, Kakkanad, focusing on the theme of loneliness among the elderly. Through emotive songs and acting, the skit portrayed how many senior citizens feel isolated and neglected despite being surrounded by others, aiming to raise awareness and promote compassion and support for the elderly. The event was honored by the presence of the District Collector, Sub Collector, Senior Magistrate, and other officials, who delivered inspiring messages on elder care and rights.

The Sub Collector highlighted various government welfare schemes for senior citizens, while the Senior Magistrate led an insightful session on elder abuse and legal protection. The skit was performed by Megha Mathew, Midhun Alias, Mariam Anna Sajan, Ashiya Nasreen K. A. (II Yr BSW), and Jomon M, Aksa Antony, Nikhila K. S. (II Yr MSW), leaving a meaningful impact on the audience and reinforcing the importance of empathy and dignity for the elderly. The event served as a strong reminder that awareness is the first step towards building a more compassionate and inclusive society for our senior citizens.

## STUDENT VOLUNTEERING FOR CHANGE



On June 28 and 29, 2025, second-year MSW Community Development specialization students from Bharata Mata School of Social Work—Aakash P. R., Alen Shilson, Anandhu R., Athulya Unnikrishnan, Fathimathu Sharafiya, Jomon M., Muneera Asharaf, and Nikhila K. S.—volunteered in a Women Leadership Program organized by the Sustera Foundation in collaboration with Amballur Panchayath, titled "കാലാവസ്ഥ വ്യതിയാനം; എനിക്കും ചിലത് ചെയ്യാനുണ്ട്". The students actively facilitated ice-breaking activities and SWOT analysis sessions, which encouraged open dialogue, self-awareness, and critical thinking among the women participants.



This volunteering experience enabled the trainees to engage with women from peri-urban areas, primarily from upper and middle-class families, helping them gain deeper insights into the social challenges faced by women, especially regarding gender roles and empowerment. The program's focus on climate change and community leadership made the experience particularly impactful, offering the students a valuable opportunity to apply their academic learning in a real-world setting while also promoting social responsibility and environmental awareness.

## ORGANIZATION VISIT



The social work trainees from Bharata Mata School of Social Work had the opportunity to visit two key institutions as part of their fieldwork training — the St. Jude Home Science Institute at Angamaly South and the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) in Ernakulam. The visit to St. Jude Home Science Institute, a charitable organization founded in 1985 under the Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth, provided an overview of its family-oriented services, including legal assistance in domestic violence cases, youth and family empowerment programs, and personality development workshops. The orientation offered insight into the intervention techniques and social services carried out by the institute's multidisciplinary team.



Similarly, the visit to the DCPU on July 29, 2025, offered an in-depth understanding of the legal framework, organizational structure, and operational mechanisms of child protection in Kerala under the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS). The trainees interacted with protection officers, legal officers, and counselors, gaining firsthand knowledge about the implementation of child protection laws such as the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, and the POCSO Act, 2012. These visits significantly enriched the trainees' practical learning, deepening their understanding of how both governmental and non-governmental institutions contribute to the welfare and protection of vulnerable populations.

## EXPRESSIVE ART THERAPY WORKSHOP



Second-year MSW students of Bharata Mata School of Social Work had the enriching opportunity to participate in a two-day Expressive Art Therapy workshop held on June 30 and July 1, 2025. The session was facilitated by Ms. Krishnendu, a distinguished Dance/Movement Therapy Practitioner, Social Worker, and Classical Dancer. She is also the founder of Navem, a Trivandrum-based organization specializing in expressive therapies aimed at addressing psycho-social concerns through creative modalities.

The workshop began with a gentle warm-up and self-introduction session, setting a welcoming and safe atmosphere. Over the two days, students engaged in a variety of expressive activities such as playing musical instruments, mirroring exercises, roleplays, and creative drawing, each carefully designed to help explore and articulate emotional experiences. After every activity, participants engaged in brief reflective evaluations to deepen their self-awareness and emotional processing. The workshop not only fostered emotional expression and group connection but also offered insights into the practical application of expressive art modalities in social work practice.



# ENVIRONMENT DAY–2025
# BSW INITIATIVE




# ENVIRONMENT DAY–2025
# MSW INITIATIVE

## Feminism Today, A Step Forward, or Two Steps Back?

According to (Brunell & Burkett, 2024), feminism, the belief in social, economic, and political equality of the sexes. Although largely originating in the West, feminism is manifested worldwide and is represented by various institutions committed to activity on behalf of women's rights and interests.

Feminism is a concept that is greatly misunderstood by people all around the world. The men in the community as well as women who are still stuck on to the old patriarchal mode of living, slut-shame and oppress and mislabel the women who stand up for their rights or the choices they make.

After all the feminist movements we had in the past, where did we actually fail to accomplish that all human beings regardless of their gender are equal. The rights or freedom that the women are enjoying now is a part of the hardships the women faced during the feminist movements in the past. Modern feminism is a broad term comprising the contemporary feminist movement and the fourth wave is epitomised by "digital or online feminism" (Rosa, 2024). The fourth wave is characterized by digital activism like #me too movements, intersectionality, body autonomy, trans and LGBTQIA+ rights, and so on.

**So where does the Backlash come from?**

With more visibility comes more scrutiny and it comes from a wide spectrum. Online hate from both men and women labeling feminists as man haters as well as a trend called 'Trad Wife" movement also known as the traditional wife movement, is a social media-based subculture where women embrace traditional gender roles within the home, emphasizing domesticity, homem-aking, and serving their husbands and families. This movement, often associated with a nostalgic vision of 1950s womanhood, has gained popularity on platforms like TikTok and Instagram (Hawkins et al., 2024).

So why so many women are turning against feminism even though they support feminist ideas, according to (Scharff, 2019), misrepresentation in media, often feminism is misunderstood as aggressive, anti-men etc. and misinformations by media influencers like Andrew Tate who spread misogynist ideologies and concepts like alpha-men and the list becomes endless. The situation in India is much more complex as it deals with the clash between tradition and bodily autonomy, caste, moral policing and slut- shaming. However women still demand equality on pays, freedom of choice and respect.



**Ann Chrisswie**
**Second Year MSW**

Modern feminism is not perfect but it is a necessary movement since the young girls are internalizing misogyny and toxic relationships from influencers. Lets not forget to keep our values of equality while scrolling through as we have fought through centuries to get the freedom we get now.

**So, are we moving forward or backward ?**

## Gender and Water Conservation: What School Students in Thenkurussi Panchayat Know

Water is a very important part of our life, and saving it has become a big issue in the world today. With problems like water shortage, climate change, and overuse of water, it is important that we start teaching people from a young age how to save water. Schools play a key role in this. This study was done in Thenkurussi Panchayat among Upper Primary (UP) school students to understand how much they know about water conservation and how gender affects their awareness.

The study found that most students know the basic ways to save water, like turning off taps, using less water while bathing, or watering plants with reused water. But girls showed more interest and knowledge in water-saving practices than boys. This could be because girls are often more involved in household work where they learn about saving water. It was also found that students mostly knew about saving water at home, but not much about community-level efforts or new methods like recycling water. Teachers and school programs helped a lot in spreading this knowledge.

As a social work trainee, I found this mini research very useful. It showed me how gender roles can affect the way students learn about and take part in environmental protection. I understood that both boys and girls need equal chances and encouragement to learn about water conservation. This research also made me realize that as future social workers, we can design better awareness programs in schools by understanding what students already know and where they need more help. We can also use fun group activities, stories, and school projects to make learning about water conservation more interesting for all children.



**Jomon M**
**Second Year MSW**

# BHARATA MATA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

**NAAC WITH A+ GRADE, NIRF RANKED IN THE BAND 100-150, DBT STAR COLLEGE, ISO 9001-2015 CERTIFIED**

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