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.

ORGANIZATION VISIT TO CHILD HELPLINE



On 14th August 2025, the MSW first semester students visited Shishu Samrakshana Vibhagam (Childline), Kakkanad as part of their organizational visit. Childline, accessible through the toll-free helpline 1098, is a national service founded in 1996 to protect children in distress, and in Kerala, it became more functional with its integration into the Emergency Response Support System (112) in 2023. During the visit, students learned about the functioning of Childline, including case handling, rescue operations, medical and psychological support through District Response Centres, and legal proceedings coordinated with the Child Welfare Committee and Juvenile Justice Board. They also understood the role of Child Help Desks at Ernakulam Railway Station and referral services to shelters such as DREAM, Fort Kochi. The visit provided valuable insights into the mechanisms of child protection and the collaborative role of government and NGOs in safeguarding children's rights.

ORGANIZATION VISIT TO ASHA BHAVAN



On 14th August 2025, MSW first semester students visited Asha Bhavan, Thrikkakara, an institution supported by the Samuhya Neethi Vibhagam of the Kerala Government. The visit focused on

understanding the services of the organization, which is dedicated to the rehabilitation and rescue of mentally ill individuals, including those who have recovered but lack family or financial support. The institution provides care, protection, and community-based support to ensure the well-being of its residents. The program began at 2.00 p.m. with an introduction and interaction with the residents, followed by recreational activities to encourage participation and engagement. Students also interacted with the warden to learn about the existing facilities, limitations, and government initiatives, as well as possible measures to strengthen and upgrade the services provided by the organization.

ORGANIZATION VISIT TO TRANSGENDER CRISIS INTERVENTION CENTRE



As part of their observation visit, the first semester MSW students visited the Transgender Crisis Intervention Centre at Kakkanad, Kochi, on 14th August 2025. This organization, inaugurated by the Kerala Social Justice Department on 12th May 2025, is the state's first transgender crisis centre. The institution provides 24-hour counselling and shelter for transgender individuals experiencing violence, abuse, harassment, or other crises. In addition, it offers counselling services, mental health support, legal guidance, and awareness on crisis management within society.

During the visit, the MSW first-year social work trainees interacted with the coordinators to gain a better understanding of gender identity, particularly the preference of members to be addressed as "transpersons" rather than "transgender." The trainees also learned about the mental, economic, social, and physical difficulties faced during the gender transition period and after openly expressing their identity in society. Discussions were held on the challenges, limitations, funding issues, and possible measures to strengthen both the community and the functioning of the organization.

ORGANIZATION VISIT TO DON BOSCO PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT CENTRE

MSW first semester students visited the Don Bosco Psycho-Social Support Centre (DBPSS), Palluruthy, as part of their organizational visit on 16th August 2025. Established in 2016, DBPSS provides support to children, young people, and parents through various programmes and facilities such as the Bosco Kids Club, Computer Training Centre, Sneha Bhavan Library, Linking Hands programme, Sneha Bhavan Home, Don Bosco Boys Home, Bosco Nilayam, Valsalya Bhavan Ammathottil, Valsalya Bhavan Annex, and Bosco Nilayam.



During the visit, the students learned about the functioning of these initiatives and how the centre offers psycho-social care, skill development, shelter, and educational opportunities. The interaction helped the trainees gain knowledge about child rights, rehabilitation processes, and the role of community-based programmes in supporting vulnerable groups.

ORGANIZATION VISIT TO COTTOLENGO FAMILY, PALLURUTHY

On 16th August 2025, the MSW first semester social work trainees visited the Cottolengo Family, Palluruthy, Kochi. The community provides care for differently abled children, abandoned elders, and the poor, treating them as members of one family rather than as patients. The mission began in 1977 at Fort Cochin with a small home for special children and later expanded to Palluruthy in 1984, where nearly 50 residents receive therapy, food, and support. In 1996, a centre was established in North Paravur to offer training and job opportunities for differently abled individuals to help them live independently. Across these centres, the focus remains on creating a home-like environment where compassion, dignity, and acceptance guide everyday life. The visit enriched the trainees with knowledge about the setting, functioning, and community-based rehabilitation practices of the organization.



COMMENCEMENT OF CSR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Bharata Mata School of Social Work launched a new Certificate Program on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with a batch of 27 students. The program, which commenced on 16th August 2025, is designed as a 60-hour course conducted in online mode. Classes are scheduled from Monday to Saturday between 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., providing participants with structured learning on CSR practices and applications.



TOGETHER FOR GRACEFUL AGEING – CONFERENCE



On 21st August 2025, BSW students from Bharata Mata School of Social Work participated in the program "Together for Graceful Ageing", a conference on advancing geriatric care through collaboration, held at Bless Retirement Living, Aluva, in connection with Senior Citizens Day.

The sessions included a welcome address, keynote speech, and panel discussions on integrated geriatric care, dementia and depression, and palliative and end-of-life care. Experts from various hospitals and institutions shared perspectives on medical, psychological, and social aspects of ageing, emphasizing the importance of collaborative approaches for dignified living in later years. It was an enriching session that helped the students gain valuable insights into graceful ageing

INCLUSION WITH DIGNITY: GENDER SENSITIZATION PROGRAM



The Department of Social Work, Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara, organized a program titled Inclusion with Dignity: A Gender Sensitization Program on 22nd August 2025, in collaboration with Welfare Services Ernakulam (Sahrudaya) and supported by V-Guard Industries Ltd. The program aimed to spread awareness on gender identities, promote inclusiveness, and encourage respect and dignity for the transgender community.

The session began with a prayer and welcome, followed by an introduction by Fr. Sibin Manayampilly, Assistant Executive Director, Welfare Services Ernakulam. Session I was led by Sri. Victor John, Project Coordinator of Marivillu TG Clinic, who spoke on gender sensitization and the importance of acceptance. Session II was handled by Ms. Hina Haneefa, District Social Justice Board Member, Malappuram, who discussed issues related to legislation and mental health and shared her personal experiences. The program concluded with an interactive discussion.

ONAM CELEBRATION AT MAROTTICHUVADU ANGANWADI

As part of the Department of Social Work's outreach initiatives, an Onam Celebration was organized at the Marottichuvadu Anganwadi, Edappally (Ward 2) for the elderly persons on 20th August, 2025. The program was coordinated by Aleeta Godfrey (MSW), Maria Annechien Boonstoppel (MSW), Adarsh S (BSW), and Jewelnath V. S (BSW).



A total of 24 elderly women from the community participated, each preparing a dish that came together as a grand Onam Sadya, the highlight of the day. The celebration also featured traditional songs, games, and sharing of memories, fostering a spirit of cultural pride and togetherness.



Councilor Ms. Arjuna Hashim attended the function, extending greetings and appreciating the initiative for blending cultural traditions with community engagement. The ASHA worker, Ms. Raseena, also joined and offered her support. The program concluded on a festive and heartwarming note, with

participants expressing happiness, gratitude, and keen interest in being part of more outreach programs in the future.

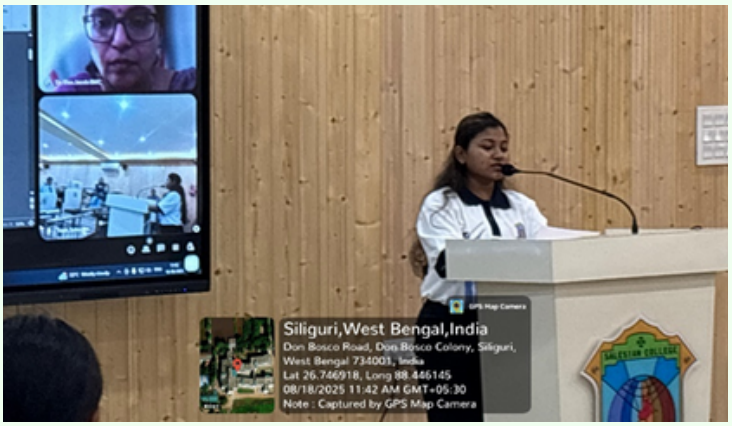
INFORMAL MEETING WITH THE ELDERLY CLUB MEMBERS



As part of the Social Work Department's outreach initiatives, an informal meeting was organized on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, with the elderly residents of Ward 36 of Thrikkakara Municipality. The session aimed to engage with the senior citizens, understand their needs, and provide emotional support. The meeting was facilitated by Athulya Unnikrishnan and Honey K. Prahaladan (MSW), along with Ashlin Maria, Siyona Felix, and Ejo Sebastian (BSW), fostering meaningful interaction and community bonding. The discussions highlighted concerns related to health, loneliness, and access to welfare schemes. The session concluded with a commitment to continue such interactions, ensuring that the voices of the elderly are heard and valued.

FACULTY AS RESOURCE PERSON

On 18th August 2025, **Dr. Elsa Mary Jacob**, Head of the Department of Social Work, Bharata Mata School of Social Work, served as the resource person at Salesian College, Siliguri, during the National Social Work Week celebrations. She delivered a special lecture on the Scope and Future Prospects of Medical and Psychiatric Social Work, emphasising



the growing relevance of the field in addressing mental health challenges and the integration of social work in multidisciplinary healthcare teams. Dr. Elsa also highlighted career opportunities, research areas, and the need for trained professionals to respond to emerging psycho-social issues. The session, held at JPM Hall, included an invocation, introduction, interactive discussions, and concluded with a vote of thanks.



Dr. Sheena Rajan Philip, Senior Faculty at Bharata Mata School of Social Work, was a key speaker on Day 3 (20th August, 2025) of the five-day International FDP titled "Charting the AI Epoch: Future Directions for Social Work Research and Practice." Her session focused on “AI in Health Care: Ethical & Practical Implications for Social Work Practice,” where she insightfully addressed the integration of AI in health settings, highlighting both its potential and ethical complexities. Her contributions added critical depth to the discourse, emphasizing the social worker's role in navigating AI responsibly within healthcare systems.

SAMEEKSHA: PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL CAMP



The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) Camp, Sameeksha, was held from 22nd to 26th August 2025 at Aashrayam Rural Development Society for the MSW first semester students. The camp began with an orientation session, nature walks, cultural programmes, and an inaugural function. In the following days, students engaged in field visits and community interactions, applying PRA tools such as social mapping, resource mapping, transect walks, historical timelines, seasonal calendars, distance analysis, Venn diagrams, and metric ranking. These activities were used to study community issues including indebtedness, malnutrition, sanitation, substance abuse, and unemployment.

Students also conducted interviews, group discussions, and cultural exchanges with the villagers, with active involvement from the community. Documentation, report preparation, and evaluations were carried out under faculty guidance. The camp concluded with student reflections, group presentations, cultural events, welfare initiatives like Onam kit distribution, and a valedictory function. The programme provided practical exposure to rural realities and helped students gain skills in teamwork, problem-solving, and community engagement.









SAMEEKSHA



















ACADEMIC REFLECTIONS

ENHANCING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRIBAL CHILDREN: A SOCIAL WORK APPROACH

Education is widely recognized as a fundamental right and a key driver of social and economic development. However, tribal children in India continue to face significant barriers in accessing quality education. Geographical isolation, poverty, cultural differences, and lack of awareness about educational opportunities often result in low enrolment rates, high dropout levels, and limited academic achievement among tribal populations. These challenges not only hinder individual growth but also perpetuate cycles of marginalization. Social work, as a profession committed to social justice and empowerment, plays a crucial role in addressing these disparities and promoting inclusive education for tribal children.

Barriers to Education Among Tribal Communities

Tribal children encounter multiple challenges that restrict their educational access. Many live in remote areas with inadequate infrastructure, such as poorly equipped schools, lack of qualified teachers, and limited transportation facilities. Socioeconomic factors, including parental illiteracy, child labour, and economic dependence on traditional livelihoods, further reduce school attendance. Additionally, cultural and linguistic differences between tribal communities and mainstream education systems often make the curriculum seem alien, resulting in disinterest and disengagement. Social workers must understand these complex factors to develop effective, context-sensitive interventions.

Social Work Interventions for Promoting Education

Social workers employ a range of strategies to enhance educational opportunities for tribal children. Community mobilization is one effective approach, involving parents, local leaders, and children in awareness campaigns about the importance of education. Establishing bridge courses and remedial programs helps children catch up academically and adapt to mainstream curricula. Social workers also advocate for policies that improve school infrastructure, provide scholarships, and ensure mid-day meals to reduce economic pressures on families. Non-formal education initiatives, including after-school programs, storytelling sessions, and cultural learning activities, can make education more relatable and engaging for tribal children.

Collaborations with government agencies, NGOs, and local community organizations amplify these efforts. For example, social workers may coordinate with tribal welfare departments to ensure children receive access to residential schools or government schemes like scholarships, free uniforms, and textbooks. By combining direct intervention with systemic advocacy, social work bridges the gap between marginalized communities and educational institutions.

Positive Outcomes and Broader Implications

Effective social work interventions have been shown to increase school enrolment, reduce dropout rates, and improve academic performance among tribal children. Beyond academic achievement, these efforts foster self-confidence, social inclusion, and critical life skills. Education also empowers children to challenge discriminatory practices, participate in decision-making, and envision alternative livelihoods beyond traditional constraints. At a community level, educating children has a ripple effect, promoting awareness

among parents and gradually changing societal attitudes towards education.

Enhancing educational opportunities for tribal children requires a multifaceted approach that combines community engagement, advocacy, and culturally sensitive interventions. Social workers, through their expertise and commitment to social justice, play an indispensable role in creating an inclusive and equitable educational environment. By addressing systemic barriers and empowering tribal communities, social work contributes not only to individual development but also to broader social transformation. Education, when made accessible and relevant, becomes a tool of empowerment that allows tribal children to realize their potential and actively participate in shaping their future.



EMY MARY GEORGE
SECOND YEAR MSW

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR IN YOUTH: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS

Around the world, families, schools, and communities are facing a growing problem—antisocial behavior in young people. The teenage years are often full of ups and downs, as young people figure out who they are, deal with peer pressure, and face emotional challenges. For many teens, these experiences are normal. But for some, these challenges turn into behaviors that harm themselves or others. Fighting, vandalism, substance abuse, or refusing to follow rules are not just signs of rebellion—they are warning signs that something deeper may be wrong. If these behaviors are ignored, they can cause stress for families, disturb schools, and make communities feel unsafe. Social workers play an important role in helping young people break these patterns. They act as guides, mentors, and supporters, helping teens find better ways to deal with challenges.

Understanding Antisocial Behavior

Antisocial behavior is more than being rude or stubborn. It includes actions that break social rules, hurt others, or show no respect for community values. In young people, it can show up in many ways, such as fighting, bullying, theft, vandalism, using drugs or alcohol, skipping school, disobeying teachers, or taking dangerous risks like reckless driving or unsafe sexual behavior. While it's normal for teenagers to test boundaries, repeated and harmful behavior often points to deeper emotional, social, or environmental problems. Recognizing these behaviors early is very important, because the sooner support is provided, the better the chances of helping teens make positive changes.

Root Causes and Contributing Factors

There is no single reason why young people act antisocially. It is usually a mix of personal, family, and social factors. Families are the first influence in a child's life, teaching them how to behave and interact with others. Homes with neglect, harsh punishment, abuse, or constant conflict can make children feel angry, scared, or helpless, which may lead to aggression or self-destructive behavior. Friends also play a big role during the teenage years. Teens often do risky things to fit in with their peers, whether it is using substances, breaking rules, or engaging in crime. School experiences matter too. Failing in studies, feeling unsupported by teachers, or being left out of school activities can lower self-confidence and increase frustration. Communities and neighborhoods also influence behavior. Areas with high crime, poverty, or few opportunities can make antisocial behavior seem normal, especially when there are no safe places for recreation or learning. Mental health and biological factors, like ADHD, depression, or other disorders, can make some teens more likely to act out, especially when combined with difficult environments.

Theoretical Perspectives

Experts have several ideas about why some youth show antisocial behavior. Social Learning Theory, suggested by Albert Bandura, says that children copy what they see. If they see aggression at home, among friends, or in media, they are more likely to repeat it. Strain Theory, proposed by Robert Merton, explains that frustration arises when young people feel pressure to succeed but do not have real opportunities, which may push them toward breaking rules or committing crimes. Ecological Systems Theory, by Urie Bronfenbrenner, shows that children are influenced by many layers of their environment—family, friends, school, community, and society. This means that to help teens, we need to consider everything around them, not just their individual behavior.

Consequences of Antisocial Behavior

Antisocial behavior affects more than just the young

person. Teens who act out may struggle in school, develop substance problems, face legal trouble, and experience long-term mental health issues.

Families may go through stress, arguments, and sometimes broken relationships. Schools face disrupted classrooms, lower morale, and safety issues. Communities deal with higher crime rates, more pressure on social services, and strained justice systems. If these behaviors are not addressed early, they often continue into adulthood, making it harder for young people to hold jobs, build relationships, and live safely and successfully.

Social Work Interventions and Approaches

Social workers are important in helping youth overcome antisocial behavior. They work in prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation, combining knowledge, care, and practical solutions. Programs in schools, workshops, and family sessions teach coping skills, emotional control, and ways to handle conflicts before problems grow bigger. Social workers also find out why a teen is acting out, whether it is due to trauma, school struggles, or family issues, and create plans to meet their needs. Counseling, both individual and in groups, gives teens a safe place to talk, reflect, and learn better behaviors. Group sessions also help them learn teamwork, empathy, and how to interact positively with peers.

Helping families is a key part of social work. Parents often need guidance on how to discipline positively, communicate, and manage conflicts. Strengthening families helps young people thrive. In schools, social workers encourage restorative approaches that focus on responsibility, repairing harm, and improving relationships, rather than only using punishment. They also work with community leaders to create safe places for recreation, skill-building, and vocational training, offering alternatives to antisocial behavior. For teens in the juvenile justice system, social workers provide education, mentoring, and training to help them reenter society with hope and skills.

Challenges Faced by Social Workers

Even though social workers do critical work, they face many challenges. High caseloads, limited funds, and under-resourced welfare systems make it difficult to give each young person enough attention. Families may resist help due to stigma, denial, or distrust. Communities with poverty, violence, or inequality make it harder to create change. Problems like underfunded schools and few job opportunities make antisocial behavior more likely to continue. Despite these challenges, social workers' dedication and persistence often lead to positive changes, helping young people turn their lives around.



HIMA KRISHNA
SECOND YEAR MSW

Antisocial behavior among youth is not a passing phase that can be ignored. It is a complex social issue rooted in family struggles, peer influence, socio-economic conditions, and mental health challenges. Left unchecked, it risks perpetuating cycles of harm that extend into adulthood. Social workers frontline agents of change. With empathy, skill, and systemic vision, they help young people navigate struggles, rebuild family bonds, and connect to constructive community opportunities. Their work represents not only intervention but investment—investment in youth, families, and the future of society. If we truly care about the next generation, we must strengthen support systems, fund social work programs, and create environments where no young person feels forced into destructive choices. Every adolescent deserves the chance to grow not into a problem for society, but into a responsible, creative, and contributing member.

PUBLICATIONS, AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

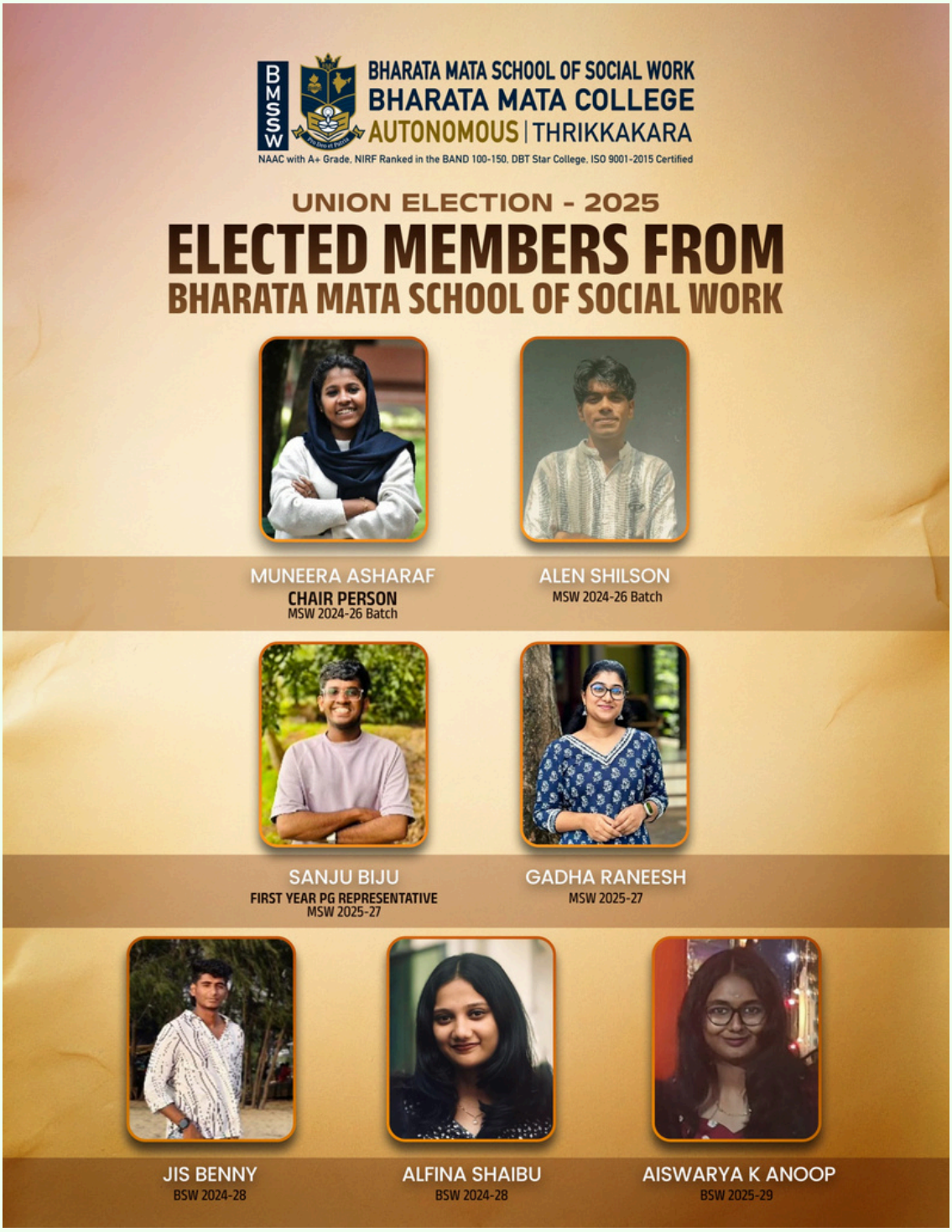
Dr. Sheena Rajan Philip, from the Department of Social Work at Bharata Mata College, Ernakulam, has co-authored an insightful opinion article titled “Digital Silence: How Algorithmic Censorship Undermines Academic Freedom in the Global South,” published in Frontiers in Communication (Volume 10, 2025) [1]. This work critically examines the subtle yet pervasive impact of algorithmic censorship on academic freedom, particularly in the Global South. Dr. Sheena's contribution brings a unique social work perspective to the discourse, emphasizing the socio-cultural implications of digital suppression and advocating for equitable access to information. Her involvement underscores the interdisciplinary nature of the study, bridging technology, communication, and social justice.

Reference:
https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/communication/articles/10.3389/fcomm.2025.1640244/full?utm_source=F-NTF&utm_medium=EMLX&utm_campaign=PRD_FEOPS_20170000_ARTICLE



D**r. Remesh Krishnan P**, Assistant Professor at Bharata Mata School of Social Work, has been awarded his Ph.D. in Social Work, marking a significant academic milestone. His doctoral research, titled "Technoference and Family Health: An Explanatory Study of Families With Adolescents Having Problem Behaviors," sheds light on the complex dynamics of technology interference within family systems and its impact on adolescent behavior. This remarkable achievement reflects his dedication to meaningful research and contribution to the field of social work. The institution proudly congratulates Dr. Remesh Krishnan on this well-deserved recognition and wishes him continued success in his academic journey.

UNION ELECTION - 2025



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