



ONWARD



BOMBAY YMCA NEWS - MARCH 2025



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GENERAL SECRETARY'S THOUGHTS

"I lift my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."

Psalm 121:1-2

The year 2025 dawned upon us with an electrifying start, filled with a series of impactful events that left us with hardly a moment to pause and reflect. It has been a whirlwind of celebrations, commitments, and milestones, all woven together by God's grace and faithfulness. As we stand at the threshold of celebrating 150 glorious years, we look back with gratitude at the incredible journey that has shaped the Bombay YMCA into what it is today.

The words of Psalm 121 resonate deeply within our hearts, reminding us that our strength and purpose are divinely ordained. Many interpret this passage as a psalm for sojourners—a divine assurance of protection and providence on life's journey. For the Bombay YMCA, this verse encapsulates our enduring legacy, one built on faith, service, and a commitment to uplifting communities.

Our story began on June 6, 1844, when Sir George Williams founded the first YMCA in London, England. What started as a small gathering of 12 young men above a drapery shop has now blossomed into a global movement spanning 120 countries, impacting over 64 million beneficiaries worldwide. The Bombay YMCA has played a pivotal role in this movement, forging partnerships with national and international organizations, pioneering social initiatives, and championing causes that bring hope and transformation to countless lives.

As we march forward in our sesquicentennial year, our mission remains unwavering: to empower young leaders, serve the underprivileged, and spread the love of Christ through meaningful service and impactful programs. This milestone is not just a celebration of the past but a clarion call for the future—to seek new avenues, embrace innovation, and inspire the next generation to carry forward the torch of the YMCA's legacy.



Austin Kunder
General Secretary

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 150TH YEAR CELEBRATIONS

All India Inter YMCA Volleyball Tournament

Held from January 24-26, 2025, in association with the National Council of YMCA, this prestigious tournament witnessed 10 teams competing in a thrilling league-cum-knockout format. Indian Volleyball Women team coach Miss Hema Ullas Kelkar inaugurated the event, setting the stage for intense competition. Physical Education College, Chennai emerged victorious, with Faridabad and Ajmer YMCA securing second and third places. The grand prize distribution was graced by Mr. Eldo N. Varghese, National General Secretary. This tournament reinforced YMCA's sporting legacy, fostering camaraderie and excellence.

Sam T. Berkeley Hill English National Inter-School Elocution Contest

With zonal eliminations across Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi, Ernakulam, Bangalore and Cuttack, the contest saw participation from 109 schools and 280 students. This initiative continues to inspire educational excellence and personal growth among students.

The Grand Finale on January 25, 2025, at YMCA International House, Mumbai, featured outstanding performances.

YMCA Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop

From February 10-15, 2025, at YMCA Camp Lakeside, Nilshi, Mumbai, 42 participants engaged in leadership training covering Strategic Planning, Financial Management and Community Impact. Under the guidance of Mr. Austin Kunder, General Secretary of Bombay YMCA and a panel of esteemed speakers, the workshop fostered Christ-centered Leadership, Interactive sessions, including Trekking, Archery and Team-Building sessions, enhanced experiential learning. The program concluded with a valedictory ceremony, certifying participants as future change-makers by Vice President of National Council of YMCAs and President Bombay YMCA, Mr. Noel Amanna

LOOKING AHEAD

As we continue our sesquicentennial celebrations, we invite volunteers and visionaries to join us in furthering our mission. The Bombay YMCA remains steadfast in nurturing young leaders, uplifting communities and serving with Christ-centered dedication. With God's grace, we step forward into a future of hope and transformation.

To God be the glory!

SAVE THE DATE – APRIL 25, 2025!

Be part of history as we celebrate 150 years of faith, service, and transformation!

Venue: NCPA, Nariman Point, Mumbai

All are invited at 5:00 pm

YMCA TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT)

A Transformation Leadership Journey

February 10-15, 2025 | YMCA Camp Lakeside, Nilshi, Mumbai

The six-day YMCA Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop held from February 10-15, 2025, at YMCA Camp Lakeside, Nilshi, Near Pune, was a transformative experience for 42 participants from across YMCA Centres in India. The event organized by Bombay YMCA along with the National Council of YMCAs of India (NCYI) aimed to enhance leadership capabilities, promote youth empowerment and equip participants with the skills to plan, design and implement impactful programs.

Day 1: Monday, February 10, 2025

The inauguration of the event began with a warm welcome and orientation of the campsite by Mr. Austin Kunder, General Secretary of Bombay YMCA. The opening ceremony included the felicitation of Mr. Eldo N. Varghese, National General Secretary, and Mr. Austin Kunder, General Secretary of Bombay YMCA.

The first session of the workshop was led by Mr. Eldo N. Varghese, National General Secretary, who kicked off the event with an insightful presentation on Mission-Driven Programs. He emphasized the profound calling of every YMCA professional to engage in a mission rooted in faith, with a specific focus on empowering youth and fostering community-oriented initiatives.

Mr. Eldo spoke passionately about the importance of developing a Christ-centered character as a foundational trait for YMCA professionals. He stressed the significance of being deeply committed to serving young people, particularly those facing crises. He further highlighted the values of detachment, integrity, and self-reflection, which are essential for leadership.

In his session, Mr. Eldo encouraged the participants to not only improve their professional skills but to also cherish the journey of working with young people. He urged them to plan and implement programs that would engage youth, creating opportunities for them to build meaningful connections with both faith and their community. The evening concluded with a debriefing session to reflect on the learning.

Day 2: Tuesday, February 11, 2025

The morning began with a body booster session led by Mr. Amul Raj, Sr. Secretary of Bombay YMCA. After breakfast, the morning devotion was conducted by Mr. Ashish Throat, Secretary, Finance and Administration, NCYI, who reflected on how Christ nurtured love, comparing individual versus collective excellence.

Mr. Rajan S. Mathews then presented the first session on Strategic Planning, Innovation and Future Trends in Leadership Development. He discussed the role of a leader in guiding organizations, emphasizing strategic planning for success and leadership qualities such as humility, assertiveness and the ability to organize resources.

Mr. Sunder Singh B., Associate National General Secretary, led a session discussing 'Vision 2030' adopted by World Council of YMCAs, outlining the four pillars of impact i.e. Community Wellbeing, Meaningful Work, Sustainable Planet and Just World. The afternoon was spent engaging in outdoor activities on team-building, archery and swimming followed by a Cricket Tournament.

Day 3: Wednesday, February 12, 2025

The morning started with a reflective nature activity. After breakfast, the devotion was conducted by team David McConaughy led by Mr. Sujin, focusing on the message "Seek first the Kingdom of God."

The first session of the day was on Program Design and Implementation by Mr. Atul Meshramkar, which emphasized the importance of structuring programs effectively to meet goals, including using SMART goals for youth engagement and program sustainability. This was followed by a session on Program Monitoring and Evaluation by Mrs. Sunita Atul Meshramkar, where she discussed the significance of assessing programs for improvements and sustainability. Post Lunch activities included rock climbing, swing & walk, swimming and Kayaking. The evening session highlighted the International Award for Young People, under the aegis 'Duke of Edinburgh' conducted by Ms. Kavita Patil.



YMCA TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT)

A Transformation Leadership Journey

February 10-15, 2025 | YMCA Camp Lakeside, Nilshi, Mumbai

Day 4: Thursday, February 13, 2025

The day began with a Trek to 'Camp 18', followed by a devotional reflection led by Michael Solomon from YMCA Goa, who explored the story of the Good Samaritan.

Mr. Stanley Victor's session on Leadership Development and Team Building focused on the importance of leading change and the essentials required for effective teamwork, such as collaboration, communication and being a catalyst for others.

The afternoon was spent engaging in rock climbing, rappelling, archery and swimming. This was followed by a session on Media & Communication by Mr. Adrian Rozario who highlighted the importance of authentic communication and effective media strategies. Later, Dr. Sonia Elizabeth Prasadam led a session on Psycho-education, teaching leaders how to create a safe space for youth and taught with demonstration how to approach crisis situations.

This was followed by a session on Finance Management Practices, Income Tax Rules and Compliance by Mr. Noel Amanna, who emphasized the importance of financial planning for organizational success. Mr. Stanley Karkada, Former General Secretary, Bombay YMCA shared his journey with YMCA, recounting his impactful contributions and experiences, including the establishment of YMCA's Nilshi campsite.



Day 6: Saturday, February 15, 2025

The final day started with a group activity led by Dr. Sonia Prasadam, where participants reflected on their learnings from the program, showcasing their growth through creative exercises. The event concluded with a valedictory ceremony, where all 42 participants were awarded certificates and souvenirs by Mr. Noel Amanna and Mr. Stanley Karkada.

A campfire brought the group together for a time of fellowship, show of talents and celebration.

The training program concluded with a group photo, marking the end of a transformative journey for all participants, who left equipped with new insights, skills, and a renewed sense of purpose.



Day 5: Friday, February 14, 2025

The morning started with a mind game session led by Mr. Adrian Rozario, focusing on ethical decision-making. Dr. Sonia Elizabeth Prasadam then led the morning devotion on the topic of Love, reflecting on Ephesians 5:1-20.

The day's sessions included Transformational Leadership and Conflict Resolution by Mr. Amit Singh Winget, where he discussed the importance of emotional motivation, vision and faith in leadership.



Central Branch

Christmas Carol Service was held on 21st December 2024 and saw good gathering of 95 hostel residents, members and guests. Three Churches performed Christmas Carols and Skit namely Bowen Methodist Church, Bombay Baptist Church and House of Prayer. Rev Avinash Rangayya gave message to the gathering. Residents conducted games for the guests. This was fellowship dinner.



XXXVII Sam T. Berkeley-Hill National Inter-School English Elocution Competition

The Bombay YMCA, as part of its Sesquicentennial (150th year) Celebrations, successfully hosted the XXXVII Sam T. Berkeley-Hill National Inter-School English Elocution Competition. The event saw participation from 109 schools and 280 students from across the country.

All the 6 Zonal Eliminations at Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi, Ernakulam, Bangalore and Cuttack respectively were conducted successfully. Judges namely Mr. Ratan Batliwala and Dr. Michelle Philip accompanied Mr. Allen Kotian and Mr. Austin Kunder. One local Judge came from every zone namely Dr. Vinod Shemron (Bengaluru), Dr. Rita Das (Cuttack), Micheal Hoffland (New Delhi), Dr. Elango (Chennai) and Dr. Nirmala Lilly (Ernakulam). All the YMCAs organized the competitions well and were excellent hosts to the participants and guests. 3 Zonal Prize winners were invited to Mumbai for the Grand Finale accompanied by either a teacher or parent. All 18 children were present for the competition.



Zones Schools No of Children

YMCA Bangalore 19 Schools 56 Children
YMCA Chennai 11 Schools 28 Children
YMCA Cuttack 21 Schools 60 Children
YMCA Ernakulam 11 Schools 27 Children
YMCA New Delhi 11 Schools 22 Children
YMCA Mumbai 36 Schools 87 Children
Total 109 Schools 280 Children



The Grand Finale was held on 25th Jan 2025 at YMCA International House, Judges were M/s. Dr. Michelle Philip, Ratan Batliwala & Vernon Dsouza. Chief Guest was Mr. Santosh Sirur, International Banker, RJ, Podcaster and Writer while Guest of Honour was Mr. John Nikell, HOD of Political and Bilateral Affairs, British Deputy High Commissioner.

The Winner List is as follows -

Bengaluru: Philips Mathew Clarence High School (Winner), Anya Asirvatham Clarence High School (1st Runners up) and Venkat Shivamani Sharon School (2nd Runner Up)

New Delhi: Harman Gautam Faith Academy (Winner), Nathan Lakra Faith Academy (1st Runners up), Lakshita Singh Eicher School (2nd Runner Up).

Cuttack: Priyanshika Mother's Public School (Winner), Swastik Swarup Blossom School (1st Runners up), Navya Namasya Kar DAV Public School (2nd Runner Up).

Chennai: Tejas Srivatsa Samskara Academy (Winner), S. Venessa Keren St John Matriculation Higher Secondary School (1st Runners up), F. Shainy Xavier St Mary's Martic Higher Secondary School (2nd Runner Up)

Ernakulam: Ananya Rose Thomas Marthoma Public School (Winner), Jerusa Jerry, TOC H High School (1st Runners up), Isra Fahad TOC H High School (2nd Runner Up).

Mumbai: Jasleen Kaur Chodda, Bombay Scottish School Powai (Winner), Rhea Puthran, Bai Avabai Framji Petit Girls High School (1st Runners up), Raina Pendurkar Apostolic Carmel High School (2nd Runner Up).

Grand Finale National Winner

Jasleen Kaur Chodda, Bombay Scottish School Powai (Winner), Rhea Puthran, Bai Avabai Framji Petit Girls High School (1st Runners up), Tejas Srivatsa, Samskara Academy (2nd Runner Up).

Republic Day: The Tricolour was unfurled at 8 am in the morning at the hands of the Hon Treasurer of the branch Ms. Sunita Thomas, in presence of nearly 60 residents, guests and staff. The residents put up English and Hindi speech and a patriotic song.



Student Branch

Christmas Programme: The Student Branch Christmas programme was held on 07th December 2024. The Christmas message was delivered by Rev. Avinash Rangayya which was well received by the hostel residents. Carols were sung by girls from University Settlement which was like 'Choir of Angels'. More than 50 hostel residents attend the programme.



The **Home Tournament for TT** was held on 05.01.2025 and **Carrom** on 26.01.2025 at the Student Branch. 40 entries in Table Tennis and 18 entries in carrom were received. All the members enjoyed the friendly competition and the winners were given trophies and certificates. It was a large gathering of more than 60 Table Tennis enthusiasts and 40 carrom attended the competition including parents of the players.



The winners in the TT Under 14 Age Group are as under:
Runner up: Shauri Wagle; Winner: Insiya Bhavnagrwal
The winners in the TT above 14 Age Group are as under:
Runner up: Neeraj Dalal; Winner: Aaditya Dalal
The winners in the Carrom as under:
Runner Up: Rakesh Baria; Winner Satish Kotkar



Republic Day program was held at 8:30 a.m. with the unfurling of the Indian Flag. The inspectors from the D.B. Marg Police Station attended the ceremony. All the hostel boys were present at the ceremony. The P.I. Shri Prasant Sawant unfurled the Flag and all sang the National Anthem.



The **Latent programme** was conducted on 2nd February, 2025. The main speaker was Marian D'Lima and was ably supported by Adrain Rosario. We had 79 boys from the hostel who attended this "Self-Discovery" program. The boys enjoyed the experience which was a huge learning with lot of fun and activities. The latent was held from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the YMCA student branch in the Bowen Hall.



Procter Branch & Swimming Pool Department

The Procter Branch **Christmas Celebration** was held on 13th December 2024, bringing together members, staff, and the local community for an evening of music and fellowship. For the first time, nearby schools participated in a lively carol singing event, spreading festive cheer. Guest speaker, Mrs. Kshama Thomas Jayaraj shared a heartfelt message on the love of Christ, while the 'House of Prayer' church presented a meaningful skit. The evening concluded with a delightful dinner fostering joy and togetherness.



The **44th Inter-School & Junior College Swimming Competition** was held on 4th and 5th January 2025. Students from various schools and junior colleges participated enthusiastically in categories ranging from Under 6 to Under 17 for both boys and girls. The event was graced by Asian Champion, Ms. Pooja, who delivered an inspiring speech, motivating young swimmers. The competition showcased exceptional talent, sportsmanship and a commitment to excellence in swimming



The **51st Annual Inter Club Swimming Championship** was successfully conducted on Saturday, 1st February and Sunday, 2nd February 2025 at the Bombay YMCA Swimming Pool. The event witnessed an overwhelming response with 975 total entries across 48 events catering to swimmers from ages 6 to 70+.

All the events were conducted as per schedule, ensuring a smooth and well-organized competition. Swimmers from various clubs showcased their talent, determination and sportsmanship in their respective categories. The championship highlighted exceptional performances with several participants setting new records. The event concluded with a Prize Distribution Ceremony recognizing the outstanding swimmers and the best-performing clubs



The **Special Olympic Swimming Competition** was held on 13th January 2025. This event provided a platform for physically challenged children, visually impaired, special children, and hearing & speech-impaired participants to showcase their swimming skills and determination. The competition witnessed enthusiastic participation, with children displaying incredible resilience and talent. Parents and guardians expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the YMCA and Lions Club for hosting such an inclusive and encouraging event. The initiative not only promoted sportsmanship but also highlighted the importance of equal opportunities in sports



The Procter Branch **Annual Mallakhamb Competition** was held on 11th and 12th January 2025, featuring around 175 participants from Mumbai and its suburbs. The event was honored by the presence of esteemed guests, Mr. Ganesh Devrukhkar (Dronacharya Awardee) and Mr. Uday Deshpande (Padmashri Awardee). Participants showcased exceptional skills making the competition highly competitive and engaging. Parents and coaches appreciated the well-organized event praising the efforts of the organizers. The competition successfully promoted Mallakhamb, encouraging young athletes to pursue excellence in the sport.



The **Christmas program** for its members and Balwadi children was held on December 14, 2024. The festive spirit illuminated the ambience, creating a vibrant atmosphere filled with the sparkle of Christmas. The celebration welcomed attendees with dazzling Christmas lights, colorful decorations and festive music setting the perfect mood for the day. The program included a variety of games and attractions catering to all age groups.

Hundreds of children and parents enthusiastically participated with winners receiving surprise gifts. Several stalls offered souvenirs and food items for sale, including Christmas decorations, small goodies, cakes, fast food, and handcrafted items. The excitement peaked with a mesmerizing magic show and a delightful choir performance by volunteers, accompanied by a mascot that added to the lively entertainment. The event concluded with a lucky draw where 18 winners were rewarded with prizes adding a joyful finish to a memorable celebration.

The program concluded with the distribution of snacks and the presentation of Basic and Advanced Beautician certificates by the Chief Guest of the function, Mr. Sanjiv Anand, Chairman and Managing Partner, Cedar's Global. This memorable celebration was made possible by the dedication and hard work of the teachers who played an essential role in organizing and facilitating the entire event.



An **awareness program on nutrition** was held on 4th February 2025 to educate Balwadi parents about the importance of a balanced diet and the health risks of fast and packaged foods. Led by Minal Sawant, a Dietician from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, along with field worker Trupti Karkera and volunteers Muhamed Shamnad and Vaibhav Shrotriya, the session focused on the benefits of home-cooked meals over processed foods. The interactive discussion allowed parents to share experiences and gain practical advice on improving dietary habits. The well-received event aimed to clear misconceptions and promote healthier food choices, with hopes that it will positively impact the community, especially children's nutrition.



The **Kindergarten Annual Day Celebration** was held on 21st February 2025, was a joyful event that showcased the talent and enthusiasm of our young learners. The evening began with a welcome speech by Senior KG student Saisha Mayangade followed by an opening prayer. Students from all sections performed energetically with special dance performances by teachers and group dances featuring young learners and their mothers. Chief guests Mr. Adrian Rosario and Mr. Joe George honored the winners of Sports Day with medals. The event blending entertainment and community spirit concluded with snack distribution, leaving everyone with lasting memories of a fun and meaningful day.



HEARING screening camp was held on 21 December 2024 at YMCA Bandra for the Balwadi Children which was organised by Montfort Care Brothers. The primary goal of the program was to raise an awareness among parents about the importance of hearing health in young children, its early detection of hearing impairments and available interventions for addressing hearing issues.



On January 26, 2025, **Republic Day** was celebrated with a sequence of formal activities and events aimed at honoring and contemplating our nation's liberation. Students from every classroom showcased their talents through lively dances, dressed in colorful tricolored costumes. The event featured speeches in both English and Marathi, delivered by junior and senior class students respectively. The event offered Ketsugo students a valuable opportunity to demonstrate their skills they've acquired in their classes.

Andheri Branch, Boys Home & Vocational Training Centre

INDRADHAUSH

A week-long programme titled 'Indradhanush' was held from 9th December to 14th December 2024. This was a maiden attempt bringing awareness of the various programmes and activities of the YMCA to the local community in association with the like-minded organisation.

The programme consisted of free Medical Check-up Camp, Book fair, sale of art and craft / hand made goods prepared by the visually and hearing impaired children, Blind Orchestra culminating with Branch Christmas programme on 14th December 2024. A full day session with eminent speakers had sessions on the following topics eg 1. Mental Well-being for Educators 2. Gen Z - Challenges & Solutions, 3. The Power of Full Engagement with students, 4. Future of Teaching as part of the Teachers' Enrichment Programme.



This is planned to be held regularly earmarking the second week of December each year. This programme reaches out to organisations and NGO who are working for the weaker section of the society. The programme was fully supported by donors and well-wishers. Some of the important individuals who made their presence felt was Mr. Ameet Satam (MLA), Rtn. Sunil Bandari, Mr. R. Rathod (Local Corporator), Mrs. Davali, Principal of Shruti School for Deaf Children, Mrs. Pallavi Chokshi (Governor of Inner Wheel Club of Mumbai District).



CHRISTMAS PROGRAMME ANDHERI BRANCH AND BOYS HOME

The Andheri Branch Christmas Celebration was held on Saturday, 14th December 2024 at 6.00 Pm.

It was an evening filled with Carols, Skit, Drama, Dance and Music. The programme started off with a colourful display of Rhythmic Gymnastics team who enthralled the audience with their performance having an artistic handling of the props. Bro. John Gabriel was the speaker who brought the Christmas message along with his team from Church at Hebron Fellowship, Borivali. The Boys Home Children presented Skit, Dance and Drama.

Few carols were also presented by the Andheri Prayer Fellowship members.



Boys Home children learning guitar too presented their instrumental carol piece. The children from the CFES programme were presented and Christmas gifts were also received by them. The invitees included Parents, Donors, Committee members and members of the Prayer Breakfast Group. The General Secretary of Bombay YMCA was present to cheer all the Boys.

It was a good gathering of approximately 200 plus people attending the programme. It ended with a fellowship dinner.



ANNUAL SPORTS DAY OF YMCA BOYS HOME

The Annual Sports Day of the Andheri Boys Home was held from 17th to 19th January 2025. The event kicked off at 3:30 PM on 17th January 2025 with a March Past. The boys were divided into 4 houses, each with a specific name and Flag colour. The guest for the opening ceremony was Mr. Mody, Principal of VTC along with Mr. Bhaskar Kumar, Senior Secretary where the Guard of Honour were presented to the Guests.

After the March Past, the boys formed YMCA by standing in shape of each letter. Team games were held in Basketball for under 16 and 11 years and Table Tennis was conducted for under 16 years Boys. Carom and Badminton singles and doubles were conducted in under 11 and 16 years age group. Box Cricket matches were held with 4 teams playing 5 overs each. Relay and recreational race were also organised for junior children. Individual games took place on the first and second days of the event with all the finals completed by 19th January 2025. The boys participated in the games as per their age and displayed great sportsmanship. The Prize Distribution for the event would be taken place during the Annual Thanksgiving Program the next month.



REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATION AT YMCA BOYS HOME AND ANDHERI BRANCH

On 26th January 2025, YMCA Boys Home celebrated our nation's 76th Republic Day.

The Flag was hoisted by Mr. V.C. Job, Member of the Branch Committee and Mr. Ninan Thomas, Member of the Branch. The National Anthem and the flag song was sung by all at the unfurling of the flag.

Two Boys Home boys delivered speeches in Hindi and English respectively. The vote of thanks was proposed by the Secretary. The closing prayer was led by the House Parent



BOYS HOME THANKSGIVING:

The Annual Thanksgiving Program at the Boys Home was held on February 8, 2025. The Chief Guest for the event was the Mr. Joseph Reddi, Chairman, Boys Home Committee. The program began with an opening prayer by the Mr. Adrian Rosario.

The evening was filled with fun and lively performances by junior boys starting with dance. Followed four boys who are currently being trained in guitar showcased their talent by performing a song. Next, the senior boys performed an exciting back-to-back dance sequence. Mothers of two boys shared their heartfelt testimonies describing the positive changes they have seen in their children and expressing their gratitude to YMCA for the exceptional care provided to them.

A short sermon of thanksgiving was delivered by Pastor Hilton Emmanuel. Former Boys Home Boys who contributed their time and efforts to the success of the Annual Sports Day was also felicitated. This was followed by the medal and certificate distribution for the Annual Sports Day presented by Chairman and other Members of the committee to all participants and winners. The overall winner was Team Joshua, followed by Team John and Abraham in second and third place respectively.

After the prize distribution, the Chief Guest delivered an inspiring speech highlighting the important work YMCA is doing nationwide and the relentless efforts of the YMCA Boys Home for the betterment of the children's future. Mr. Mario Pereira prayed for the parents of the Boys Home and Mr. Vaibhav Yangad, Guitar Teacher closed the programme in Prayer. After the program, parents, staff and guest gathered for a fellowship dinner.



Borivali Centre celebrated its **Christmas programme** with the underprivileged children from Ganpat Patil Nagar on 19th December 2024 in association with I.C Women's Welfare Association. The children performed skit on the birth of Christ followed by dance. The teachers present sang Christmas Carols. The Bag full of Joy was distributed to all the children followed by dinner which was sponsored by the I.C Women's Welfare Association. There were 110 children present in total for the programme.



The **11th Basketball Winter League Inter-school tournament** wrapped up its season with exciting match-ups, emerging talents and intense competition organized by YMCA Borivali Centre in association with MVP Sports Academy the league featured 14 teams competing over 3 days from 18th – 21st December 2024 culminating in a thrilling championship game. We had Ocean as the beverage partner and Decathlon who sponsored Hampers for the winning teams. Mrs Tejasvi Ghosalkar, ex -corporator of Ward no1 was the Chief Guest for the Finals which was held on 21st December 2024.



Mr Jason Samuel, Chairman of YMCA Borivali Centre along with other committee members were present too for the finals and felicitated the winners.

- Under- 16 Winner's Girls- Auxillium Convent High School, Wadala
- U-16 Runners up - Vibgyor School, Borivali
- Under-14 Winner's Girls - Auxillium Convent High School, Wadala
- Under -14 Runners up - Vibgyor School, Borivali

- Under -14 winners boys-Rustomjee Cambridge, Borivali
- Under -14 runners up-Underia street MPS

Walk for Unity – 26th January 2025

To celebrate India's 76th Republic Day, Bombay YMCA, under the banner of MPC organized the 'Walk for Unity' on 26th January 2025. The 2.5 km rally began at 9:30 AM from Christ Church School, Byculla and concluded at YMCA International House, Mumbai Central. Led by the school band playing nationalist tunes, students from five schools participated, carrying placards promoting unity in diversity.

At the YMCA International House, Anjuman Khairul-Islam Girls High School's band welcomed the participants with some melodious rendition. Mr. Graham Heiden, Principal of Christ Church School, emphasized the importance of unity in diversity. The event concluded with the National Anthem with 220 students, teachers, and staff in attendance.



The **workshop on Fake News and how to debunk misinformation online** on 17th December, 2024 in collaboration with 'Boom' for students of Grade 8-10. Ms Divya Chandra and Ms. Karen Rebelo were the two speakers who conducted the workshop. There were total of 50 students, 4 teachers from 4 schools who participated in the workshop. The Workshop helped students to be more cautious of their social identity on digital platforms and misinformation. Students found the workshop highly engaging and informative. Many expressed greater confidence in identifying and challenging fake news. Teachers and facilitators noted increased awareness and enthusiasm among students to verify information before believing or sharing it.



SHARAN - Shelter for Homeless Women and Children

Sharan continues to empower and rehabilitate women and children facing various forms of abuse and challenges, offering them a safe environment to rebuild their lives. This first quarter of the year was rich with activities, events and partnerships aimed at the holistic development of beneficiaries.

Key Events & Celebrations

Nirbhaya Squad Visit- On December 6, 2024, the Nirbhaya team of M/s Chayya Mali & Anupapa with the help of Sakinaka Police Station visited the Sharan. They personally met all the beneficiaries in Sharan and questioned each woman about how they came to the shelter and what problems they were facing.



Christmas Celebration - On 23rd December 2024 Christmas was celebrated in Sharan. Mrs Kshama Jayraj, Chair person and Ms. Sheetal Gupta, Secretary and many former beneficiaries also present. Mrs. Kshama encouraged and motivated beneficiaries and shared inspiring words with them followed by the recreational program that the women had prepared together. Beneficiaries performed two dances and songs respectively. Beneficiary Manali Chauhan gave her testimony and expressed her feeling towards Sharan all the beneficiaries participated in the games organised by Secretary Sheetal Gupta which was enjoyed by all. Special Dinner (Biryani & sweets) was served. After dinner, we had an open group discussion specially for former beneficiaries and encouraging and motivating them to handle their personal issues.



New Year Celebration- On 1st Jan 2025, New Year celebrated in Sharan, on this special and on the first day of the year all beneficiaries share their resolution and they are and they will work hard to achieve their dreams .

Transco logistic On 4th Jan 2024 Transco logistic team visited Sharan and they celebrated New Year with the beneficiaries, they brought special lunch for shelter beneficiaries and new year gifts. They all had lunch together and spent some time with the beneficiaries.

Makar Sankranti- On 14th of Jan 2024, makar sankranti was celebrated in sharan. Tilgul sweet, Samosa & Chocolate balls was distributed to everyone .



Republic day celebration:

On 26th Jan 25 , republic day was celebrated in the Sharan shelter. On this special occasion beat office Choudhary, Puri from Sakinaka Police Station and Guardwell staff were present. Police officers hosted the flag. Success stories in brief about Sharan Shelter were shared. The beneficiaries presented songs and shared on the importance of Republic day. Special snacks were arranged for everyone.



NSCCI - YMCA Ghatkopar Branch & Chembur Centre

The **Christmas** was celebrated with Balwadi children and Teachers on 20th December. The event was graced by Mrs. Kunder & Mr. Bobby Kunder, Chairman, Committee members Dr. Shakti Waghe and Sam Benjamin. The celebration featured carol singing, a Christmas story narrated by the teachers and the distribution of 'Bags Full of Joy' to the children. The festive atmosphere brought joy and cheer to everyone present.



The **Christmas Fun Fair** was held on 21st December from 5 PM to 9:30 PM, offering an evening of excitement with carnival rides, magic shows, games, and food stalls for children and parents. The event drew a crowd of over 500 attendees, creating a vibrant and festive atmosphere for all.



The **Annual Day Celebration** was held on 17th January 2025 with the theme 'Carnival'. The event held at the Ghatkopar premises, was graced by Chief Guest Mr. Bobby Kunder, Chairman, along with committee members Supriya Telgote, Sam Benjamin and Joe Parakka. Their presence added warmth and encouragement to the gathering. The evening featured vibrant performances by Playschool, Junior KG, Senior KG, and VTC students, showcasing their creativity and enthusiasm. Prizes were awarded to 106 students for their achievements in competitions and academics with new titles like "All-Rounder Student" and "100% Attendance" introduced to inspire regular attendance and active participation.

The event provided a wonderful platform to celebrate talent, foster holistic development and strengthen community bonds among students, teachers, and parents.

It concluded on a high note with a heartfelt vote of thanks by Sheetal Gupta, Secretary in charge of Ghatkopar YMCA, expressing gratitude to all contributors and participants.



The **Republic Day celebration** was held on 26th January 2025 which began at 8:30 AM with the national flag unfurled by Chairman Mr. Bobby Kunder. The event was graced by Mrs. Bobby Kunder, his mother, Mr. Sam Benjamin, and Mr. Joe Parakka. A key highlight was the distribution of Sports Day certificates to 97 children for their participation in various races, fostering enthusiasm and sportsmanship. The event concluded with snacks for pre-schoolers, creating a joyful and patriotic atmosphere for all.



A **Free Medical Camp** was held on 15th February 2025 from 10 AM to 3 PM at the Ghatkopar Branch. A dedicated team of 10 doctors and 5 volunteers from Fortis Hospital, Mulund provided their services. The camp offered various health checkups, including general health checkup, body checkup, blood tests, eye checkup, dental checkup, and child counseling. A significant number of senior citizens, balwadi children, and their parents from the local community benefited from this initiative. A total of 137 individuals participated in the camp, making it a successful and impactful event.



The 10th Open Invitational **Inter School/Junior College Swimming Competition 2025** was held on 8th February 2025. A total of 820 entries were received for the competition across 60 events. We invited Ms. Rutuja Udeshi, a Shiv Chhatrapati Awardee, to serve as the Chief Guest and she presented medals and certificates to the winners.



The **Christmas** program for the Free coaching class and Night Study Center children was held on 21/12/24. The children performed a song and a dance which was appreciated by the donor.

The children enjoyed sumptuous high tea and received gifts sponsored by Octolion Media Pvt Ltd followed by a dinner.



The **Christmas get-together** was held on 17th December 2024. The program had carols and songs from Volunteers, Full Members and Hostel residents. The Navi Mumbai Branch Choir team welcomed the gathering with an instrumental song followed by a special dance on Jesus's birth by our volunteers. The Christmas message was brought by Pastor Santosh Johny. The evening was cherished by all with a fellowship dinner for all the guests and students.



The **Republic Day celebration** took place at Navi Mumbai Branch along with our members, hostel residents and Free coaching class children. The Senior Inspector from CBD Belapur unfurled the National Flag. Our night study centre students presented a speech and dance on a patriotic songs the whole programme was anchored by our study centre student.



Online Exam Stress Session: The session witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and college-goers with a total of 38 registrations. The interactive nature of the session conducted by Dr. Sheryl John (Psychiatrist) on 18th January allowed attendees to openly discuss their exam-related challenges. Engaging activities and live demonstrations of stress-relief techniques enhanced the learning experience. Participants appreciated the empowering and practical strategies shared throughout the session. The feedback from Parents and guardian who attend the session along with the students were highly encouraging.

Introduction to Biblical Counselling was held on February 1st and 2nd, 2025, in a hybrid format. We were fortunate to have Pastor Sebastian L, Mr. Bhanu Prakash, and Mrs. Rachel Ellis as our facilitators. Their expertise and guidance ensured that the 11 participants received high-quality information and benefited greatly from the sessions.



The Bombay YMCA, Belapur, runs a **night study class** for underprivileged children at Sambhaji Nagar, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai. The class operates daily from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM and provides academic support to students from 1st to 8th standard.

Currently, 35 children are enrolled in the program, with an average daily attendance of 26-28 students. The night study class aims to offer a supportive learning environment, helping students with their studies and overall development. A supervisor is present to monitor and ensure that all children are studying effectively.



Vocational Training Institute

On December 20, 2024, Christmas was celebrated for the YMCA preschool children at Kanhe VTI. Mr. Austin Kunder, the General Secretary, graced the occasion. The program began with a word of prayer by Mr. Mangesh Patole followed by the singing of a Christmas Carol. Santa Claus distributed chocolates to the kids. After that a special gift from the YMCA 'A bag full of joy' was presented to the pre-school children by the General Secretary.



The preschool children and parents, along with VTI staff, students and nursing care course students attended the Republic Day ceremony. Nursing students and pre-school children presented their dance and short speeches on Republic Day.



The **Quiz Competition** for rural schools in Maval taluka was held at Kanhe VTI on January 28, 2025. A written test was conducted at the participating schools on January 20, 2025. Based on the results, six teams from six schools in the Maval area were selected to participate in the final round. The competition encompassed a wide range of subjects, including general knowledge, art, science, mathematics and history. We were honored to have Mr. Austin Kunder, General Secretary, and Mr. T. D Thomas Hon. Treasurer, as a guest for the grand finale. The winners were awarded trophies and certificates by our honorable guests.



The **Annual Day celebration of YMCA Pre-School, Kanhe**, was held on February 28th, 2025. Mrs. Salve did a fantastic job hosting the event and the performances by the Nursery, Junior KG and Senior KG students were truly delightful. The enthusiasm of the children and parents added to the joyous atmosphere of the occasion.



International House

Republic Day was celebrated at IH on 26-1-2025. Mr.N.V Eldo, National General Secretary NCYI and Mr. Austin Kunder, General Secretary were present on the occasion.



Outreach & Development Department

World AIDS Day Rally and Street Play

On December 2, 2024, ORD organized a rally and street play to observe World AIDS Day. The rally began at the Vocational Training Center and passed through Agripada Market, Madhapura, Mumbai Central, and Kamatipura, ending at the ORD office.

The event was inaugurated by Mr. Austin Kunder, General Secretary. Around 180 participants, including teachers, helpers, students, social workers and volunteers joined the rally, carrying banners and chanting AIDS awareness slogans.

In Kamatipura, a youth group performed a street play with skits and songs to educate the community on AIDS prevention.



Bag Full of Joy - 2024

This year, 2,500 gift bags were distributed to children from Bombay YMCA's social projects, including BMC Balwadis, community Balwadis, NSCs, non-formal classes, and YMCA branches. The gifts brought joy to the children and helped with their studies. Parents were happy to see their children receive these thoughtful gifts, making the celebration even more special.



The **Christmas Get-together** was held on December 28, 2024. Rev. Paul Renjithan delivered the Christmas message. Dr. Philip Kassey welcomed the gathering.

Mr. Austin Kunder, General Secretary offered special greeting to all the participants. The event saw enthusiastic participation from the Balwadi, NSC and VTC staff. A series of engaging cultural programs added vibrancy to the celebration, making it a memorable occasion for everyone present.



A **Life Skills session** was conducted for VTCE students and ORD Department teachers in collaboration with TISS students. The session focused on Creative Thinking and Analytical Skills, emphasizing their importance in personal and professional growth. It included an engaging discussion and interactive activities to encourage critical thinking in a fun and meaningful way. The active participation of students and teachers made the session both insightful and enjoyable.



Physical Education Department

All India Inter YMCA Volleyball Tournament

As part of the 150th Anniversary Celebrations of Bombay YMCA, the National Council of YMCA, in association with Bombay YMCA, successfully organized the All India Inter YMCA Volleyball Tournament from 24th to 26th January 2025. A total of 10 teams participated in the league-cum-knockout format.

The tournament was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, Miss Hema Ullas Kelkar, Indian Volleyball Captain and Chhatrapati Awardee, during an inspiring opening ceremony.



The final day witnessed the esteemed presence of Mr. Eldo N. Varghese, National General Secretary, alongside Mr. Austin Kunder, General Secretary and Mr. Simon Fernandes. This was organized as part of the 150th Anniversary Celebrations of Bombay YMCA in association with the National Council of YMCA. The Physical Education College, Chennai emerged victorious with Ajmer YMCA as runners-up and Faridabad YMCA securing third place. Mr. Eldo N. Varghese presented the prizes and certificates during the closing ceremony. The event garnered positive feedback from the National Council staff, players and coaches reflecting its success in promoting sportsmanship and YMCA's legacy.



Spiritual & Moral Emphasis Committee

The **Pastors & Leaders Seminar 2025** was held on 8th February at Central YMCA bringing together 60 pastors, leaders, and mentors to strengthen their faith and calling. The event began with a welcome by Mr. Allen Kotian, an opening prayer by Rev. Arpana Rangayya and worship by the House of Prayer church team. Key sessions included 'Giving Our Talents to God' by Pastor Cyril Georgeson who urged leaders to use their gifts for God's Glory and Focusing on 'Our Call' by Bro Rajiv Chelladurai, emphasizing commitment to God's purpose. The seminar concluded with a vote of thanks, mementoes for attendees and fellowship over tea leaving participants inspired and renewed in their ministry.



The **Monthly Youth Get-Together** was held on February 22, 2025 at International House with 40 youth from various denominations.

The UBM Church youth led activities and games, while the City Rock Church Mumbai youth led in a powerful time of praise and worship. Pastor Aishwarya Sonawane shared an inspiring message on "Love Unites," emphasizing humility and gentleness.

The evening concluded with fellowship over dinner, making it a blessed and enriching gathering.





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