



*Dear friends in India, dear Nandhini, dear Fr Regis, dear Fr Charles, dear Ambrose, best wishes to all of you from Arivu-Team Nienburg, Germany!*

We hope that this newsletter finds you in good health and mood. We are happy to share some activities that have taken place in the months January - April. We hope you enjoy reading!

### India Evening at ASS Nienburg

In January the group, that visited India in October 2024, invited people to the "India Evening at the ASS". We tried to share some of the warmth with which we were welcomed in Chennai and Neerpair with the guests and greeted them with tea and snacks. The "Hand Bell Plate Ensemble der ASS" also played some music as a welcome.



In a PowerPoint presentation, we told the guests about our wonderful and impressive trip. In particular, we informed about the problems faced by Dalits in Indian society and the dedicated work of Nandhini, Ambrose, Father Charles, and the entire team in Chennai and Neerpair.

After the presentation, the guests were invited to have a mehandi tattoo applied and we also set up a small Indian bazaar. Over a delicious meal we had many interesting conversations about the work on the projects in India with the guests.



## 5th Grade & India Workgroup

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In January, Hilde and Nora informed all 5th grade classes about the projects in India and the collaboration between the ASS and the team in India. After that some 5th grade students decided to sell cakes in the school's cafeteria or set up a flea market in the classroom to raise money for the projects.



The India Workgroup also made various crafts, which were then sold at the open day of ASS to benefit the projects in India.



## Open Day

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At the beginning of April, the ASS held its annual open day. The various subject groups and workgroups presented their work. Many children who are moving on to secondary school after primary school used the opportunity to get to know the ASS with their parents at this special day. The music groups welcomed the guests with a colorful musical program. The India Workgroup also welcomed guests with bindis, tea, and a bazaar.



## Demonstrations: International Women's Day & against Racism

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On International Women's Day, a rally took place in the pedestrian zone in Nienburg, highlighting the fact that women are still discriminated in Germany and around the world and the importance of fighting for equal rights. Lina gave a short speech at the rally.



More than 600 people attended a demonstration against racism in Nienburg in February. The demonstrators carried many signs which called for example for the observance of human rights for all people.

Lina also gave a speech at this demonstration, in which she emphasized the importance of working with diverse people rather than excluding people based on their religion or nationality. She also used the opportunity to emphasize that parties that deny climate change should not be elected. In Germany, these are the same parties that want to limit the number of refugees entering the country.



## Annual Meeting of Arivu

Like every year the annual general meeting of Arivu was held in March. And again it was held as an online video conference. That enables members who are not from Nienburg to participate. After a review of last year's activities and a brief report on current developments in India, we reflected our financial situation and discussed the projects for the current year.



The trip in October 2024 inspired us all and filled us with great joy. The inauguration of the toilet facilities for the girls was a particular highlight. We would like to continue to support the school and the boarding. One particularly urgent wish, which was expressed in 2023, is another school bus for Dr Arulappa Hr Sec School. Together with Aktion Indien and the Mariano-Josephinum secondary school, we would therefore like to contribute to the purchase of a new school bus in the summer. We hope that this will greatly improve the situation for many students.



## Standard 13 and its last days at Albert-Schweitzer-Schule (ASS)

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For standard 13, time of lessons at Albert-Schweitzer-school ended on thursday, 27th of march 2025. There wasn't much time left for last preparations, because the final exams in some subjects started on march 31st. Some others students still have the Easter holidays for learning before they start writing their final exams as well.

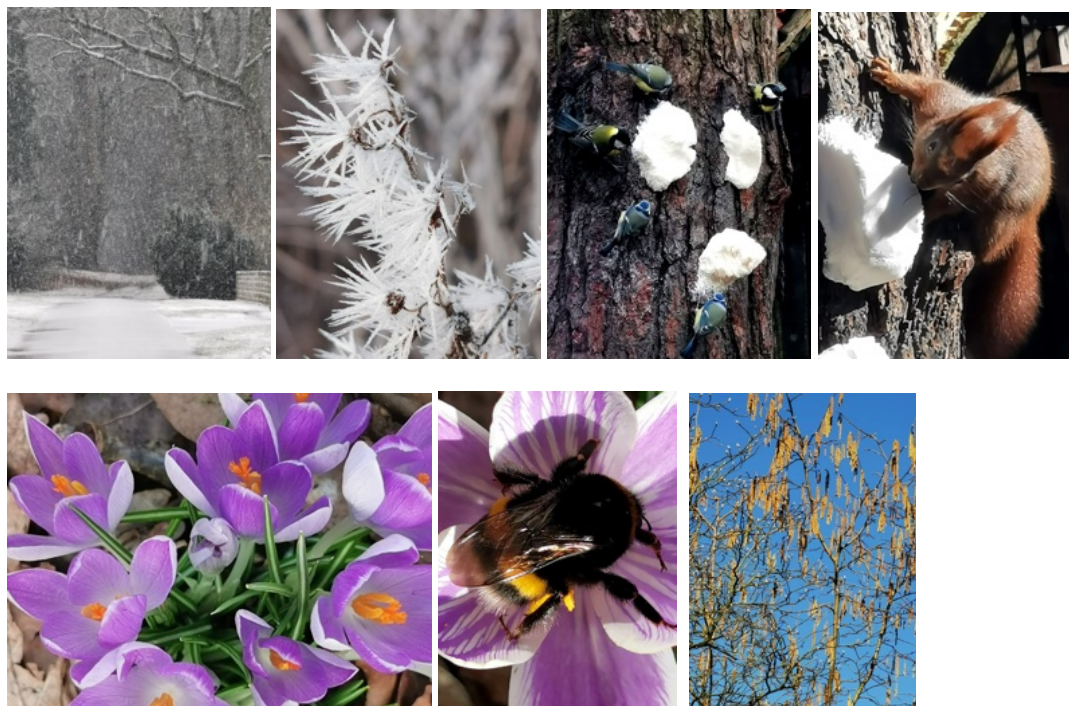
Of cause, pupils followed the long tradition to choose different themes and to spend the last days fancy-dressed in their classrooms. Their motto is „ABI-Vegas“, but there are still four written and one oral exam to pass till they can maybe enjoy the glamour of Las Vegas where they are dreaming of. At least, the whole school community had a lot of fun and it was a really colorful „goodbye“ from their daily school life.



## Waiting for the sun and warmer weather after long period of winter

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We had only some snowy and frosty days this winter, most of the time the weather was not very cold. Now we hope spring is coming. The first flowers are blooming and the birds even prepare their nests.





## India Club and other activities at Gymnasium Oesede

Bettina, student of +2 writes: Colourful robes, intense flavours, Bollywood - that's India. That's what we thought when we started the 'India' seminar two years ago and began to familiarise ourselves with this completely foreign culture. And the deeper we immersed ourselves in the Indian scene, the clearer it became that the subtitle 'A country between tradition and modernity' was true. We came across deeply rooted social problems and outdated role models. We encountered issues such as the oppression of women, a lack of education and child labour, as well as the caste system. However, we also realised that society is evolving and that there is increasing resistance to precisely these problematic systems.



We also worked closely with our partner school to prepare our India exhibition in January. The Indian students sent us profiles of their everyday lives, which we were then able to display. Visitors to the exhibition then had the opportunity to fill in their own profiles, giving them a direct comparison with the lives of pupils in India. The henna tattoos and colouring in the mandalas were also particularly interesting for the younger ones, while the older ones were more interested in finding out about the political situation in India or looking at the specialist work. A special highlight were three small videos taken during the visit of some teachers in October 2024 at Dr Arulappa Hr Sec school. The intensive cultural dialogue was exciting and we really enjoyed and learned a lot.



Students of Standard IX spent one semester working on the sustainability goals of the Global Goals. This resulted in many different projects. Some of them also focussed on India. It was an interesting and enriching experience for everyone. In January, the results were presented to the school public in an exhibition.



To celebrate their last days at school, the final year students gave a concert for the younger students. The government examination started on March 30th and lasts until May. We





wish good luck to all our students! May they be able to show their talents and come out with flying colours.



In March, we held an open day on which all primary school students are invited to find out more about our school Gymnasium Oesede. All subjects and all clubss organised a stand and introduced themselves. Of course, the India club also introduced itself. It was a colourful afternoon with many interesting guests.



Students of standard V have been thinking about how they could raise money for our partner school in India. They baked lots of cakes and biscuits and sold them to their classmates during the break. They were very proud that they raised over 300€.

## MARIANO-JOSEPHINUM in Hildesheim – commitment for India



### Participation of the India-AG at the Open Day 11 January 2025

The India-AG had a lot of fun at the Open Day on 11 January 2025, with an information stand on the ground floor to inform visitors about the partner school. In a room on the upper floor, parents were able to take a break with a mango

lassi or tea. The children had the opportunity to have a tattoo painted. Parents and children enjoyed trying to identify the different spices at a stand selling Indian spices. While



many parents and children knew most of the spices and even garam masala, it was more difficult to recognise coriander seeds as such. There were many interesting conversations about the country of India and also about the relationship between the Mariano-Josephinum and an

Indian school.





## India Compulsory elective course of the 8th year at Mariano-Josephinum



At the beginning of the 8th school year, we were able to choose between several elective courses (WPKs). We opted for the India elective course because we wanted to learn more about this diverse country and our partner school. So far, we have only spent a year and a half in the elective course and have learnt a lot. Among other things, we have learnt about religion, but also about the massive contrasts between poverty and wealth in India. We are currently taking part in a competition about the human family. This

shows us that we have to stick together despite the many differences between every single person. In the coming six months, we look forward to learning more about India and continuing to have lots of fun.



### **Bastian Timpe lets the school community take part in his visit to the partner school.**

‘The unfortunately much too short time in Neerpair was one of the most memorable and beautiful experiences I had during my entire trip,’ is how Bastian Timpe, a former student of the Mariano-Josphinum, began his picture-based presentation on 18 February, in which he let the school community participate in his trip to Asia and in particular his stay at the partner school in Neerpair. Bastian Timpe travelled through Asia for a year, briefly describing his journey as ‘11 countries and 144 beds’.

Bastian's photos from the partner school, where he also spent a day with the pupils in class, are impressive. He reports on the progress made in the school and the dormitory. He was particularly impressed by the warmth of the Indians. With gratitude in his voice, he talks about his meeting with Nandhini and Father Charles, with whom he is still in close contact. Bastian was particularly impressed by Father Charles' commitment to the children in the residential home.

On this evening, the audience can immerse themselves in a completely different world. They are introduced to the strange world of the Indians. But even if they get the impression that the children at the school are doing well, the difficulties in the world's most populous country are not hidden from them.



## **Spring time in Germany**

Slowly but surely it's getting warmer, the birds are chirping and the flowers are starting to flourish. Spring is almost here and our school yard is already filled with colorful plants.



Easter's in a few weeks and everyone's counting days until the holidays. On March 5th, we started the Easter festivities with Ash Wednesday. Many students have started fasting. While many give up on things like meat for 40 days, some also strive for personal improvement, like spending more time with their loved ones. Those 40 days are meant to be used to focus on what's important in life and to be religiously active.

Simultaneously, some people are fasting because of Ramadan, an Islamic celebration that's supposed to 'cleanse' your spirit. They renounce eating and drinking while the sun is up for 29 days - Meaning they don't eat or drink, starting at sunrise until sunset. Distance is also kept to things like smoking during that time. The so-called 'Sugar Feast' marks the end of the festivities. It's the most significant Islamic feast, so undoubtedly it's grandly celebrated.

All of the students can't wait for spring and are looking forward to the time that awaits us.



## Annual Meeting of Aktion Indien in Giesen

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On Thursday, 27.03.2025, the Annual General Meeting of Aktion Indien took place in Giesen at the home of the Mispagel family. It was a very fruitful meeting, with Hannes Datta participating via video conference. Mathis Wolpers was elected as new president of Aktion Indien, and Eva Tiecke as secretary. We are looking forward to further cooperation.

*Dear Nandhini, dear Fr Regis, dear Fr Charles, dear Ambrose, dear Viji, we send our special greetings and wishes to you and all our Indian friends!*

*Please convey our wishes to all children in St John's home, to all teachers, students and staff of Arulappa Higher Secondary School and all members of WE-Group!*



*After a long period of darkness, nature awakens to new life. The first colourful flowers grow everywhere and a delicate green of new leaves develops. In just a few days, we will be celebrating the feast of Easter, the festival of life! Easter is the victory of life over death! May God shower you abundantly with his blessings and give you new hope and confidence!*

***We wish you a happy Easter!***

*Hilde, Andrea, Edda, Kathrin and all Arivu-Team  
and Cordula from Mariano-Josephinum*

