

St John's Campus, Neerpair

NEWS LETTER – July 2025

Rev. Fr. John Suresh Social Projects

Dear Friends and Well-wishers,

Prayerful greetings from Nandhini Krishnan, Rev. Fr. Backia Regis, and Rev. Fr. Charles.

We hope this newsletter reaches you in good health and high spirits, and that it brings joy and blessings to your hearts. By the grace of God and through your continued prayers and support, we are all doing well.

In this edition, we are pleased to share with you some significant events and moments from the recent past. We trust that these updates will strengthen the bond we share and keep you closely connected to our journey.

Dr R Arulappa Higher Secondary School

Re-opening of School



The new academic year commenced on **2nd June 2025** with great enthusiasm and warmth. The students were warmly welcomed by the school management and our Headmaster, Mr. Ambrose. The day began with a Holy Mass celebrated by Rev. Fr. Charles, invoking blessings for a fruitful and successful school year. Following the Mass, during the morning assembly, Mr. Ambrose, the Headmaster addressed the students and provided essential instructions and guidelines to ensure discipline and a smooth functioning of the school.

Examination Results

The last year 12th standard examination results were announced on May 8th 2025, our school scored 97% result.

Total Students



For the academic year 2025–2026, the total number of students enrolled at Dr. R. Arulappa Higher Secondary School is 758, comprising 412 boys and 346 girls. Additionally, there are

98 students in the Primary School. Altogether, the total student strength across both sections is 856

School textbooks were distributed to all students by Mrs. Seetha, the Panchayat President of Neerpair Village, marking a thoughtful start to their academic journey.

School Education Day



School Education Day is celebrated in honor of the great visionary leader, Mr. K. Kamaraj, the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. He played a pivotal role in transforming the educational landscape of Tamil Nadu by emphasizing the importance of education for all, especially for the underprivileged. In

recognition of his invaluable contribution, his birthday, 15th July is commemorated every year as School Education Day in Tamil Nadu.

This year, we were privileged to have Rev. Fr. Christu Raj, Director of the Education Commission, Diocese of Chingleput, as the Chief Guest for the celebration. The event was marked with vibrant cultural performances by our talented students, showcasing their creativity and enthusiasm.

As a highlight of the celebration, we also honored the top three rank holders among the final-year students with special prizes in recognition of their academic excellence.

St John's Home for the Children in Need:



In our home, the new academic year began on 2nd June 2025, and admissions are still in progress. Currently, we have 12 girls and 42 boys residing with us. On 4th June, Fr. Charles celebrated a special Mass for all the students, and on 22nd June, the newcomers were welcomed with a Freshers' Day celebration.

With the support of some friends and family members, we've started painting the boarding area on the ground floor. The building hadn't been painted for several years and was looking quite old. Thanks to their help, we're now giving it a fresh, brighter look for our students

WE Group



In the month of May, Mr. Tamilmani (President of WE Group), Mr. Ambrose, some WE Group members, and I visited the villages of Thatchoor, K.K. Pudur, and Kizhavalam. During these visits, we met with WE Group members and their families, and also visited several colleges. These interactions had a significant impact, allowing us to gain a deeper understanding of the students' economic and educational circumstances. As a result, we can now focus more effectively on supporting those students who need it the most.

Rev Fr Dr John Suresh



On April 22nd, we began the Silver Jubilee celebrations marking the priestly ordination of Rev. Fr. John Suresh, who was ordained as a priest on April 22, 2001. To honor this special milestone, a meaningful celebration was held, with Holy Mass concelebrated by Rev. Fr. Velankanni and Rev. Fr. Backia Raj.

The event was graced by our Bishop Neethinathan, Rev. Fr. Esthakiyus (Vicar General), and nearly 15 priests, along with several eminent personalities, members of the WE Group, the Adavu Cultural Team, and various social activists. All shared cherished memories and reflections about Rev. Fr. John Suresh. As a tribute, special diaries were released in his memory. The program was organized with great devotion and teamwork by the WE Group and the Adavu Cultural Team.

On May 12th, the 4th death anniversary of Rev. Fr. John Suresh was commemorated with a Holy Mass by Rev. Fr. Velankanni, Rev. Fr. Charles, and Rev. Fr. David Nesan. After the Mass, a short sharing of memories about Fr. John Suresh was conducted. Approximately 150 people participated in this remembrance service, honoring the legacy and life of a much-loved priest.

TRUE STORY

Dear Friends,



My name is Karunya, and I come from Mogalvaadi village. I have one brother and one sister, and I am the youngest in my family. Currently, I am studying in 9th standard at Dr. R. Arulappa Higher Secondary School. I lost my father two years ago, and my mother works as a daily wage earner to support us.

I joined this school through the help of Rev. Fr. David Nesan, and I am truly grateful for this opportunity. I really like this school and Arul Illam. The teachers here are very loving and caring, and they teach very well. They also give us many opportunities to develop our talents and build our skills.

In the boarding, we are served nutritious meals, and the wardens take very good care of us. We are happy to see the beautiful gardens around the hostel. Our Rector, Rev. Fr. Charles, is very kind and supportive, making sure we always feel at home.

I am truly happy both in school and in the hostel, and I am deeply grateful for all the help and support you have given to our school and hostel.

Thank you very much!

SUCCESS STORY



Dear Friends and well-wishers,

My name is Nivetha Mary M, and I am from K.K. Pudur. I studied from 9th to 12th standard at Dr. Arulappa Higher Secondary School, Neerpair, and stayed at St. John's Home. I have one elder brother and one elder sister. My father works as a daily wage earner, and my mother is a housewife. In this challenging situation, our family has struggled to make ends meet, and both my brother and sister had to discontinue their studies due to financial constraints.

With the help and blessings of Rev. Fr. John Suresh, I was able to complete my schooling at the St. John's campus. Thanks to the support of the WE Group, I successfully earned my Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Presidency College, Chennai. Today, I am working as an Administrative Staff member at Igarashi Motors India Limited, Chennai. I am proud to be one of the breadwinners of my family.

I am deeply grateful to all the friends from Germany and Belgium, and especially to Pappa, Dr. Johannes Mispagel, for their kindness and support. I remember Rev. Fr. John Suresh in my prayers every day, and I am truly thankful to all those who have made it possible for me to live a life of dignity. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Editor's Desk

Reflections on the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025



In this edition of our newsletter, I would like to share my thoughts on the recently passed amendment concerning Muslim properties, specifically the legislation known as the **Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025**. The term "**Waqf**" (also spelled Wakf) refers to the permanent dedication of property for religious or charitable purposes, as per Islamic law. Once a property is declared as Waqf, it becomes an

inalienable endowment—it cannot be sold, gifted, or inherited. It is meant to serve the public good or religious functions in perpetuity.

Introduced in the **Lok Sabha (The Lower House of Parliament)** on **August 8, 2024**, the Act seeks to reform the management of Waqf properties. Its stated goals include increasing administrative efficiency, resolving legal and property disputes, and enhancing transparency. However, many of its provisions are viewed as controversial and potentially harmful.

To understand the significance of this issue, we must revisit the **Preamble of the Indian Constitution**, which outlines the guiding values of our nation—**sovereignty, socialism, secularism, democracy, and republicanism**—and promises **justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity** to all citizens. These principles protect the rights of all religious and cultural communities, including India's minority groups: Muslims (14.2%), Christians (2.3%), Sikhs (1.7%), Buddhists (less than 1%) etc.

Every religious group in India has legal provisions that safeguard its institutions and practices. However, the sudden modification of the **Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025** by the current ruling government has raised serious concerns among the Muslim community and civil society at large.

Criticism:

Critics argue that they amount to an assault on religious freedom and minority rights. The inclusion of non-Muslim members into the newly created Waqf board, in particular, is seen as a direct interference in Islamic religious affairs. There are also concerns about the lack of legal remedy once a Waqf property is de-notified, and insufficient judicial oversight in some provisions.

Ongoing Legal and Public Response:

The constitutionality of the Act is being challenged in the Supreme Court of India, with the Court has declined to entertain new pleas at this stage. Meanwhile, disputes over Waqf property claims—especially in cases involving government land—continue to emerge, fuelling public unease.

Why Am I Writing This?

As a concerned citizen, I believe it is vital to voice out when constitutional values are under threat. Today, the Muslim community's rights are being targeted. But if this trend continues unchallenged, it won't stop here, Christian principles, institutions, and even Dalit rights may come under similar pressure. Together, these groups form nearly **27% of India's**

population, yet their rights are increasingly being diluted under the guise of administrative reform.

This is not merely a policy issue, it is a matter of **secularism, equality, and justice**. If one community's autonomy is compromised today, tomorrow it could be another. Defending minority rights is not just about protecting one group, it is about **protecting the soul of our Constitution**. Let us remain vigilant, informed, and united in upholding the principles that make India truly democratic and inclusive.

We are truly grateful and deeply privileged to have your continuous and unwavering support for our project. Thank you so much.

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- *Editorial team: Rev Fr Backia Regis, Rev Fr Charles, Nandhini Krishnan (and Shravanti T & Nivi K)*