NEWS UPDATE

JANUARY 2025

"We rise by lifting others."

– ROBERT INGERSOLL



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INTRODUCTION

HISTORY OF M S INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Manu and Rika Shah founded MSI in 1975, in the basement of their home in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. MSI is now the largest importer and distributor in the world of Premium Surfaces including granite, marble, porcelain and ceramic tiles, slate, travertine, limestone and other natural stone products from 37 countries. Most notably, MSI provided the granite for the Vietnam Memorial in DC.

Manu and Rika Shah established Sarva Mangal Family Trust (Sarva Mangal means 'let all be happy' in Sanskrit) over 20 years ago with compassion as their driving force for philanthropy. Manu's vision for SMFT is to act as a catalyst, challenge status quo, nurture passionate change-makers and support leapfrogging ideas that are scalable and sustainable. Today, all members from the Shah family are involved in social impact initiatives that are undertaken by SMFT. Manu supports VOSAP – Voice of Specially Abled People, which has created over 10,000 change makers and rated over 18,000 buildings rated for accessibility. He also supports Lend a hand India, which provides digital vocational training to over 300,000 students in 20,000 schools.

In 2007, Mr. Manu Shah was named Ernst & Young's national Entrepreneur of the Year in the distribution, manufacturing, and security category.

ABOUT SARVA MANGAL FAMILY TRUST

Established in 1994 by the Founders of M S International, Inc. The mission of the Sarva Mangal Family Trust is to improve and strengthen the health, education and wellness of communities and help them prepare for global jobs of the 21st century. Sarva Mangal is a Sanskrit word which means Goodness to All.

To advance this mission, the Sarva Mangal Family Trust has donated to and is continuing to work with various organizations and programs in health promotion and prevention, assisting victims of domestic violence, empowering seniors, entrepreneurship, technological literacy, community activism, and children's education.

MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS


Palliative Care Center Inauguration

The heart of healing: Manu and Rika funded Palliative Care Centre

With the generous support of Manu and Rika Shah, the Sarva Mangal Family Trust and Alpha Palliative Care have launched a Palliative Care Link Center in Thiruvalla, Kerala. The center offers vital services, including home care, inpatient care, dialysis, and physiotherapy, enhancing patients' quality of life. The Punarjani physiotherapy program stands out, helping patients regain mobility and independence. This initiative, made possible by Manu and Rika Shah, is transforming lives, providing dignity, hope, and compassionate care to individuals and their families.

EVENT – CSR EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

January 2025 – On January 11, Sparsha Trust Makkala Dhama, a childcare institution located on the outskirts of Bangalore, hosted its annual fest, featuring two key events: Sports Day and Cultural Day. The event aimed to celebrate the children's growth, development, and well-being, with a particular focus on engaging them in physical activities and fostering a sense of community.

MSIS staff was invited to judge the events and volunteer in organizing the Sports Day, an occasion that brought together 30 MSIS staff members, along with their families, to support the children. The day was filled with various athletic challenges, including tug-of-war, basketball, long jump, chess, and volleyball, providing the children with opportunities to develop essential skills such as teamwork, social interaction, and physical fitness.

These activities are critical for a child's development, as they help boost confidence, improve coordination, and foster social bonds. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to engage in play and recreational activities, which are vital for their cognitive, emotional, and physical growth.

For many children, access to regular play and sports is limited, making events like these especially significant. For the children of Makkala Dhama, the annual fest is a rare opportunity to experience the joy and benefits of sports in a nurturing environment that prioritizes their well-being.

Through their involvement, the MSIS staff helped ensure the children's right to play was not only recognized but actively supported, reinforcing the importance of such activities in fostering a healthy, happy, and well-rounded childhood for every child at Makkala Dhama.



Chess Match



Volleyball Match



Long Jump Event



MSIS Staff Facilitating the Competition

EVENT – CSR EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY





NGO VISIT – SATHYA SAI GRAMA

January 2025 – The SMFT-funded health mission to address poor vision and anemia in children was successfully conducted on January 17-18, 2025, at Sathya Sai Grama (SSG) in Karnataka, under the guidance of Dr. Nitin Shah. The mission brought together the SMFT team, healthcare workers from SSG, and local volunteers to screen 1,896 children across four schools for both vision impairment and anemia.

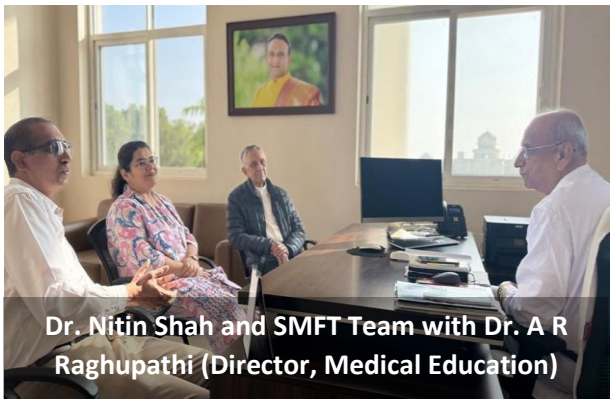
Prior to the screenings, approximately 22 SSG healthcare workers were trained by the SMFT team at Satya Sai Hospital on using screening devices and conducting trial tests. This preparation ensured a smooth and efficient screening process.

As a result of the two-day mission, 186 children were identified with refractive errors affecting their vision. These children will receive free eyeglasses, which will not only improve their vision but also enhance their ability to learn and engage socially, significantly improving their overall well-being.

In addition to the screenings, the team met with Dr. A R Raghupathi (Director, Medical Education at Satya Sai Hospital) to discuss plans for scaling up the Vision and Anemia Screening Project and future collaborations.

This mission is part of SMFT's broader commitment to improving healthcare outcomes in underserved communities. The collaboration between SMFT, SSG, and local volunteers has had a meaningful impact, providing immediate corrective measures and laying the foundation for long-term health improvements.

With this successful mission, SMFT continues to set a strong precedent for future healthcare initiatives, aiming to reach even more children in need across India. The ongoing efforts of the SMFT team and its partners demonstrate the power of collaboration in creating lasting, positive change in underserved populations.



Dr. Nitin Shah and SMFT Team with Dr. A R Raghupathi (Director, Medical Education)



Dr. Nitin Shah explaining the vision assessment process to children



SMFT Team training SSG healthcare workers

Screening Centre	No. of children screened	No. of beneficiaries Identified with refractive errors
Morarji Desai School	207	34
Govt School Kote, Gouribidanur	854	62
Adarsha School	471	45
Ambedkar and Vajpayee School	364	45

Table: Breakup of Vision Assessment

NGO IN FOCUS JANUARY'25 – LEND A HAND INDIA

About the Nonprofit



Lend A Hand India prepares youth for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities by working at the intersection of education and livelihood. They aim to integrate vocational education with mainstream education at secondary and higher secondary education levels with exposure to the world of work.

They work with the government and government-aided schools to introduce vocational education as a core component of the school curriculum by setting up labs and providing related assistance. They also bridge the gap between policy and its execution by providing technical and project management support to state governments to scale up vocational education.



Lend A Hand India Family with Alumni and Employees Family members during Republic Day 2025

About the SMFT Funded Project



- To integrate vocational education with mainstream education, equipping high school students with employability skills.
- To leverage technology for effective delivery of vocational training.
- Collaborate with the government on policies to strengthen and expand vocational education.

Expected Impact:

- Cover 1 million youth over three years with vocational education across India during Grades 9-12.
- Facilitate internships during secondary and higher secondary education to provide hands-on experience.
- Implement technology-driven solutions for effective vocational education delivery.
- Build the government's capacity for policy execution and large-scale implementation of vocational training programs.



NGO IN FOCUS JANUARY'25 – LEND A HAND INDIA (Cont.)

Project Location/Geography

Lend A Hand India operates in multiple states across India, with a significant team presence in Maharashtra and New Delhi. The organization's efforts are focused on rural and urban communities, ensuring that both regions benefit from the vocational training and career development opportunities provided.



Direct Implementation:
150+ schools | 10,000 + Students

In partnership with State Governments:
13,000+ schools | 1 million + Students

Recent Project Updates

A major milestone was the **renewal of the partnership with the Gujarat Government**, which ensures continued support for the implementation and monitoring of vocational education programs throughout the state.

Another significant achievement was the completion of the 6th Second-Level **Leadership Capacity Development Offsite.** By investing in leadership development, Lend A Hand India aims to build a strong second line for effectively scaling its initiatives.

Lend A Hand India also established a new partnership with the **Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS)** to introduce and expand vocational education programs in **Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas** across India. This collaboration will provide students in rural and semi-urban areas with access to skill-based learning, helping them explore diverse career opportunities. This collaboration reinforces efforts to equip students with industry-relevant skills and enhance their employability.

Overall Impact

Lend A Hand India aims to **impact 1 million youth over three years** by integrating vocational education (VE) into Grades 9-12 across India. Students will gain **hands-on experience through internships** during secondary and higher secondary education, enhancing their employability. **Technology-driven solutions** will improve the delivery of VE, making learning more accessible and effective. Additionally, LAHI will work towards **building the government's capacity** to implement and scale vocational education policies efficiently. Through these initiatives, LAHI strives to bridge the gap between education and employment, ensuring students acquire relevant skills for future career opportunities.

Highlight of the Month

Lend A Hand India hosted a memorable Alumni Meet, bringing together over 60 past and present team members from across India for three days of meaningful interactions, reflections, and celebrations.

January 24th: The meet kicked off with a networking dinner, allowing attendees to reconnect, share their journeys, and interact with the current team.



NGO IN FOCUS JANUARY'25 – LEND A HAND INDIA (Cont.)

January 25th (Main Event): The day started with breakfast and registration, followed by the grand display of SOW in the parking area. Former team members shared their experiences, and a special video showcased LAHI's journey. Attendees later visited Karigar, engaging with student interns and exploring project counters. The day concluded with memory-sharing, a closing note from Raj and Sunanda, and a networking dinner.



January 26th: The final day began with a flag hoisting ceremony, welcoming new members. Attendees enjoyed breakfast and informal networking before departures. A key highlight was the presence of our trustees, providing an opportunity for deeper interactions.



NGO IN FOCUS JANUARY'25 – LEND A HAND INDIA (Cont.)

In the News

- Lend A Hand India partners with IC3, The World Bank and UNICEF to conduct a 3 day workshop for 75 PM Shri Schools



'मेंटॉर'चा अभाव; 'इनोव्हेशन'ची थांबली धाव

शालेय विद्यार्थ्यांना विज्ञानाची दृष्टी लाभावी, त्यांना नवतंत्रज्ञानाचे धडे मिळावेत, या उद्देशाने केंद्र सरकारच्या नीती आयोगाने अटल इनोव्हेशन मिशनअंतर्गत देशभरात अटल टिंकरिंग लॅब सुरू केल्या. त्यात राज्यात सर्वाधिक १७५ लॅब कोल्हापूर जिल्ह्यातील शाळांसाठी मंजूर झाल्या. येथील माध्यमिक शिक्षण विभागाने दोन वर्षांत १२७ लॅब कार्यान्वित केल्या. शाळा, शिक्षण विभाग, शिक्षक आणि विद्यार्थी सकारात्मक असताना शासनाच्या पातळीवरून मात्र पुरेसे मेंटॉर (मार्गदर्शक) मिळत नसल्याने आणि तांत्रिक साहित्याच्या काही पुरवठादारांनी (व्हेंडर) गैरसमज निर्माण केल्याने उर्वरित ४८ लॅबमधील 'इनोव्हेशन'ची गती रोखली आहे.

संतोष मिठारी

अटल टिंकरिंग लॅबची स्थिती

शिक्षण विभागाला हवे शासनाचे पाठबळ

साधनांच्या दुरुस्तीसाठी निधी हवा

तालुकानिहाय लॅब

पुरवठादारांनी गैरसमज निर्माण केल्याचा फटका

राज्यात सर्वाधिक काम कोल्हापुरात

२० लाखांचा खर्च

- अरुंधती जाधव,

"In the schools of Kolhapur district where we provided training, the Atal Tinkering Lab has started functioning effectively. The scientific temperament of students has been enhanced through the use of technology, and we are satisfied with the results achieved."

— Arundhati Jadhav,
STEM Project Coordinator, Lend A Hand India

"In the past two years, the 'LAHI' organization from Pune has trained 127 school principals, teachers, and students free of cost. The response from students was excellent. Talukas and districts also exhibited scientific enthusiasm. If the right mentors are provided, students can excel in innovation and science-based projects. The education department should take note of this and implement similar initiatives in schools."

— Dr. Eknath Ambokar, Education Officer

- Lend A Hand India Signs MOU with Tribal development Department for Vocational Education in Ashramshalas.

DESHDOOT Times
....watching north maharashtra
epaper.deshdoot.com
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Vocational education for ashramshala students



NASHIK: Vocational education will be effectively introduced in government-run ashramshalas under the Tribal Development Department. An Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed with Lend a Hand India to provide pre-vocational education to students from Classes VI to VIII.

There are 497 government-run ashramshalas under the Tribal Development Department, educating nearly two lakh students. Vocational education has been available for Classes IX to HSC since 2014-15 in 179 ashramshalas across Maharashtra. With this MoU, 26,672 students from Classes VI to VIII will now also benefit from pre-vocational training.

This includes 11,825 students from Nashik Additional Commissionerate, 7,982 from Thane Additional Commissionerate, 3,016 from Nagpur Additional Commissionerate and 3,849 from Amravati Additional Commissionerate.

In the first phase, 213 ashramshalas have been selected for implementation, with more ashramshalas to be added in subsequent phases.

Meanwhile, the MoU signing event was attended by Commissioner Nayana Gunde, Additional Commissioner Sandeep Golait, Joint Commissioner Santosh Thube, and other officials.

Features of MoU

- Integration of skill education alongside traditional subjects.
- 110 hours reserved for skill-based education in the curriculum.
- Training for vocational teachers.
- Provision of quality educational materials.
- Practical exposure through internships, expert guidance, and field visits.

SUCCESS STORY – LEND A HAND INDIA

Name: Hirkani Vidyalaya
Location: Gawadewadi, Maharashtra
Project: Multi-Skill Foundation Program

Hirkani Vidyalaya, Gawadewadi in Pune, Maharashtra is encouraging innovation and environmental consciousness through the Multi-Skill Foundation Course (MSFC) program. Students from grades 9 and 10 have taken proactive steps to combat global warming with initiatives focused on renewable energy awareness, energy efficiency, and reforestation.

Spreading Awareness on Renewable Energy

During their school's Technical Day, students organized a rally advocating for solar and hydropower solutions. With banners and slogans like "No Fossil Fuels – Use Solar and Hydropower," they educated villagers on sustainable energy alternatives

Advocating for Energy Efficiency

Students also educated their community on energy-efficient eco-friendly solutions and shared tips on insulation, sustainable lighting, and reduce carbon footprints through smart design choices.

Reforestation Through Seed Balls

To combat deforestation, students initiated a reforestation drive using seed balls. With overwhelming community support, they prepared and dispersed over 25,000 seed balls, restoring degraded forest areas and promoting biodiversity.

The MSFC program empowered students to apply practical solutions to global challenges, uniting the community for sustainability. Hirkani Vidyalaya's efforts prove that young minds, armed with education and innovation, can lead the fight against climate change, inspiring others to take action.





SUCCESS STORY– LEND A HAND INDIA

Name: Monika Kumari
Location: Jharkhand
Project: Pathways

Monika Kumari, from Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, embodies the story of many women in India who challenge societal norms to pursue their dreams. Growing up in a rural community, Monika aspired to modernize her family's farm, but faced resistance in a field traditionally dominated by men. Agriculture was seen as a male-dominated domain, and the physically demanding work was often thought to be beyond women's capabilities.

Undeterred by these barriers, Monika found support from her parents and mentors. Enrolling in an agricultural internship, she proved her competence and quickly gained respect from her peers. Recognizing the power of mentorship, she connected with other women in agriculture, drawing inspiration from their experiences and building a support network that helped her overcome obstacles.

Monika's determination and perseverance have allowed her to modernize her family's farm while inspiring others to challenge societal expectations. Today, she is a role model for aspiring female farmers, demonstrating that with hard work, innovation, and mentorship, women can succeed in any field, no matter the barriers.

Her journey is a testament to the transformative power of determination and mentorship, and the importance of breaking norms that seek to limit women's potential. Monika's story is a powerful reminder that empowering women can lead to lasting, positive change in both families and communities.



SUCCESS STORY– LEND A HAND INDIA



Name: Saniya Inamdar
Location: Maharashtra
Project: Pathways

Saniya Inamdar, a first-generation learner from a modest background, faced significant obstacles in her pursuit of higher education. Growing up in a family where education was not prioritized, she often found herself struggling with financial constraints and family expectations. As school came to an end, Saniya was uncertain about how to continue her studies, unsure of how to overcome the financial barriers that stood in her way.

However, Saniya's path took a positive turn when she found support through Lend A Hand India's Internship and Pathways Program. This initiative was designed specifically to help students like Saniya who faced financial hardship and lacked guidance. Through the program, Saniya received both mentorship and financial assistance, which made a world of difference in her journey.

The mentorship component played a crucial role in Saniya's transformation. As a first-generation learner, she often struggled with confidence and direction. The mentorship she received gave her the encouragement and tools to believe in her potential. Her mentors helped her navigate academic challenges, manage her time effectively, and plan her career goals. With their support, Saniya gained the confidence she needed to continue her education and secure a seat in college, despite her initial fears and financial limitations.

A key part of Saniya's growth came from her involvement in the Safe Circle initiative. This program focuses on building public speaking skills and personal leadership, areas where Saniya had initially felt unsure. Through Safe Circle, she gradually overcame her hesitation and transformed into a more confident speaker. The safe, supportive environment allowed her to practice her communication skills, express her ideas clearly, and grow as an individual. The initiative not only helped her gain confidence but also improved her ability to connect with others, both academically and personally.

Today, Saniya is successfully managing her studies while planning to take on a part-time job, ensuring she can continue to support herself. Her journey from uncertainty to confidence is a testament to the power of mentorship, financial aid, and supportive initiatives like Safe Circle. Through these opportunities, Saniya has not only overcome her challenges but also set herself on a path to a brighter, more promising future.

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