



SOROPTIMIST WELFARE ASSOCIATION (SI Bombay Chembur)

Mahatma Education Society, Sion – Trombay Road,
Chembur Naka, Mumbai 400071

NEWSLETTER

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OFFICE BEARERS

Dr. Daphne Pillai
Founder President

Ms. Yvette Lee
President

Ms. Seeta Desai
President- Elect

Dr. Celina Joy
Immediate Past
President

Ms. Preeti Pawar
Hon. Secretary

Ms. Parveen Arif
Hon. Treasurer

Ms. Munawira
Kotiyad Pillai
Programme Action
Co-ordinator

Dr. Betty Sibil
Club Extension &
Membership Officer

Ms. Susanna
Cherian
Communication &
Publicity Officer

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Soroptimist Sisters,

As we ushered in the New Year, 2021 with a lot of hope for a better, a healthier and a freer future, little did we know that a month later we will be back to where we started. The second wave of COVID-19 hit us and this time it literally brought us to our knees, gasping for breath. This wave hit us more closely home, as many people in our families and friend's circles were detected with this deadly virus and many even passed away.

This might be a little late, but I would like to pay my deepest respect on the sad demise of our young and visionary member, Dr. Madhumita Chatterjee. She was a member who was very passionate about issues related to girls and even though her tenure as a Soroptimist was very short lived, she truly contributed in raising awareness on girls in STEM, something very close to her heart. May her soul find eternal rest in its dwelling place.

But as humans we are all resilient creatures and we have bounced back in the best way we could. Even during these darkest times, our Club members worked tirelessly to help those in need especially the marginalised communities by providing them with food grains, medicines and an oxygen concentrator, the need of the hour. Many other projects too have taken place during this time, like the commemoration of International Women's Day, Project Khushi-Donate a Meal, World Environment Day, International Day of Yoga and the NASI Project Asha.

As women and as Soroptimists, we never stop. We keep moving on and educating, enabling and empowering others.

I thank you all for your support, collaboration and eagerness to make a difference! In the words of Nelson Mandela, "We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in our hands to make a difference."

Wishing you all hope and happiness in the days to come....

Yvette Lee

President, SI Bombay Chembur

PROJECTS– JANUARY, 2021 to JULY, 2021



BLANKET DONATION DRIVE

Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC) organized a blanket collection and distribution drive in January 2021. SIBC in collaboration with Mahatma Education Society, collected blankets and warm clothing students, teachers and well-wishers. About 50 cartons of blankets and sweaters collected were then donated with the help of a few Soroptimist members and volunteers among families dwelling on the streets of Panvel, Kurla, Sion, Dadar, and several other parts of Mumbai. These were of great relief before the temperatures started dropping in February. SIBC provided blankets to more than 200 people along with biscuit packets.



TEXTBOOK DONATION DRIVE

Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC) donated textbooks, notebooks, and other stationery items to around 20 children in Santosh Bhavan, Nalasopara, a significantly marginalized slum community in Mumbai, mainly consisting of migrant workers who had returned to Mumbai after the first lockdown. These migrant workers were still facing severe financial problems and the books donated helped the young students of these families return to studying in the community-run tuition classes.



ANKURAN- SI CENTENARY TREE PLANTATION PROJECT



Members of the Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC) kicked off the tree plantation drive to observe the centenary celebrations of SI International at two villages Viz. Warwaal wadi (an Adivasi village of 35 families) and Kharpada Dushmi, located at the outskirts of Mumbai. Fruit-bearing trees were planted after a meeting with the residents of the village on 8th February 2021. Our friendship link, SI of Llandudno, also made a monetary contribution towards this tree plantation drive.



ADARSH, VILLAGE ADOPTION PROJECT

As mentioned above Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC) members planted fruit bearing trees Warwaal wadi, Pen, an Adivasi village consisting of 35 families. Post the tree plantation, the members met with all the villagers and discussed their problems and needs. Blankets were also distributed to the families. SIBC plans to adopt this village and over a few years, help them resolve water, sanitation, education, and help in skill-building for sustainable livelihoods. Our aim is to reduce poverty and to make the people self-sufficient.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

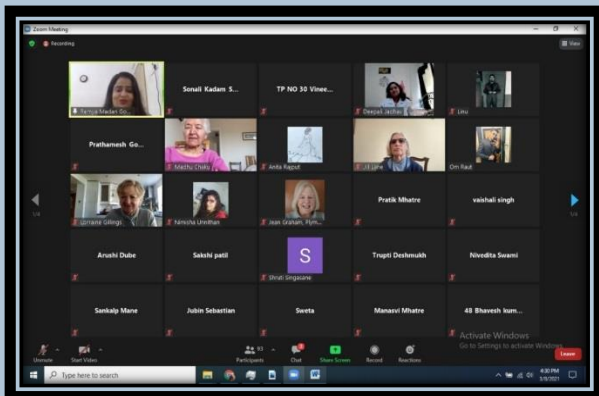


Taking into consideration the contribution of women during COVID Pandemic and the theme of UN Women – “Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in COVID-19 world”, Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC) in collaboration with Women Development Cell (WDC) and Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of Pillai HOC College of Arts, Science & Commerce, Rasayani, jointly organized a Panel Discussion and Short Film Screening on 8th March 2021, on account of International Women's Day – Women on the frontline against Covid-19.

A panel discussion was conducted with women who were still on essential duties to cope with the COVID pandemic situation. The speakers for the event were Dr. Deepali Jadhav, BHMS, Ms. Rouble Negi, Social Activist- Founder of Rouble Nagi Art Foundation, and Ms. Sonali Tukaram Kadam, Sub-divisional Officer – Alibaug, Raigad.

After the interaction session, a 16 min feature short film created by the students was screened to pay tribute to all the women who played essential roles in the COVID situation.

After both the sessions, few Soroptimist International members from Greater London and Plymouth, friendship Link of SIBC, spoke a few words of gratitude for inviting them to the event and shared their experiences with the other members. A total of 140 participants attended the session.



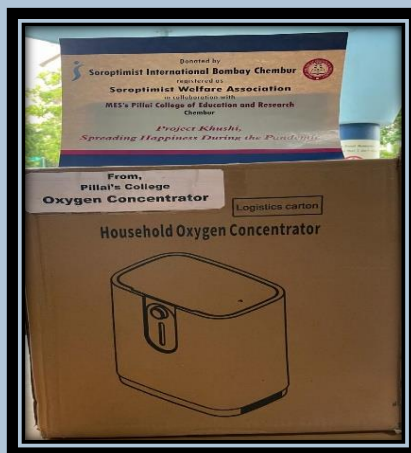
SOROPTIMIST EXCELLENCE AWARD



Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC) celebrated International Women's Day on 8th March 2021 by honouring Ms. Nidhi Goyal, disability and gender rights activist from Mumbai, with the Soroptimist Excellence Award. Ms. Goyal is the founder and executive director of 'Rising Flame' an NGO with a holistic mission to build leadership and advocacy skills among people, particularly women and youth with disabilities, enabling them to maximize their potential and change their lives. Ms. Goyal was diagnosed with a degenerative eye disorder at the age of fifteen. She has done immense work in sexuality, gender, health, and rights for women and girls with disabilities. She uses comedy as a tool for activism to talk about the stigma around disability and sexuality. The event was conducted on the Zoom platform and was attended by the members of SIBC and staff and students of the Mahatma Education Society's group of institutions.

Over a period of 10 days starting from April 31st, 2021, donations were collected from people via an online money app called as gpay. Anyone could donate any amount, the least being Rs. 50/-. At the end of 10 days, a sum of Rs 1,06,000/- was collected and was given for the following purposes:

1. Rs. 25,000/- to the Panvel gurudwarda for food kits to be distributed to marginalised people
2. Rs. 22,000/- to Don Bosco Nerul for a week supply of food in their Community Fridge Project
3. Rs. 24,000/- for an Oxygen concentrator donated to Don Bosco, Nerul
4. Rs. 25,000/- to the Lockdown Project to provide food and medicines to the marginalised
5. Rs. 10,000/- to Sr. Adoris Orphanage for food supplies



Ration distribution in association with Panvel Gurudwara-

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILSm_kLRqKE



WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC) in association with Chembur English High School raised awareness among around 350 students on the need to change our actions to help reduce the effect of climate change. The students were asked to make a video of the steps that they can take in their daily lives to reduce the effect of climate change. This video was conceptualized, scripted and edited by the students. The skit displayed stressed on the need to protect and preserve nature. The students also threw light on the importance of 'Going Green' and preserving our environment. It captivated and stimulated everyone to preserve our nature for future generations.

The video made can be found on the following link-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKiKJWEgtWs&t=2s>



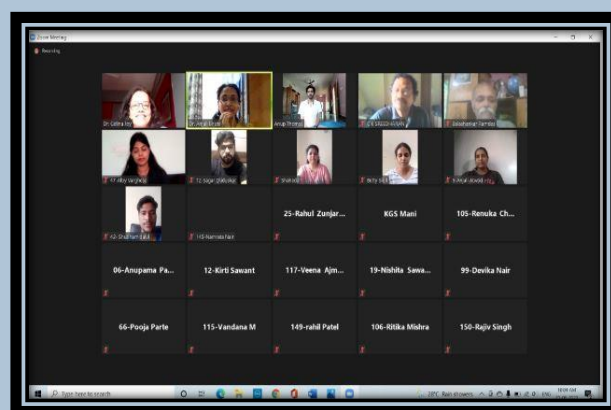
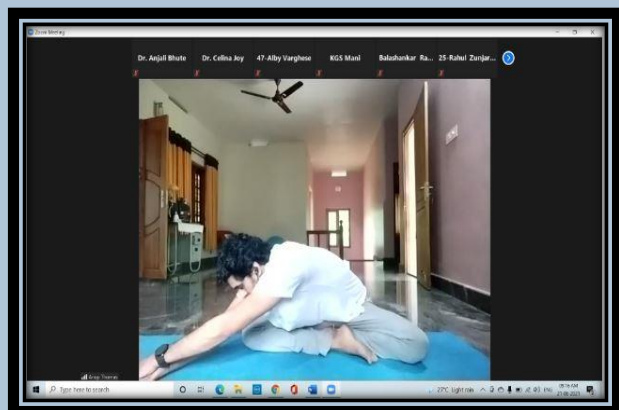
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA

Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC) in association with Pillai Institute of Management Studies and Research observed International Day of Yoga on 21st June 2021. The theme for 2021 was "Yoga for Wellbeing", the need of the hour considering the challenging time the whole world is going through due to the pandemic. The one-hour yoga session was conducted by Yoga Expert, Mr. Anup Thomas.

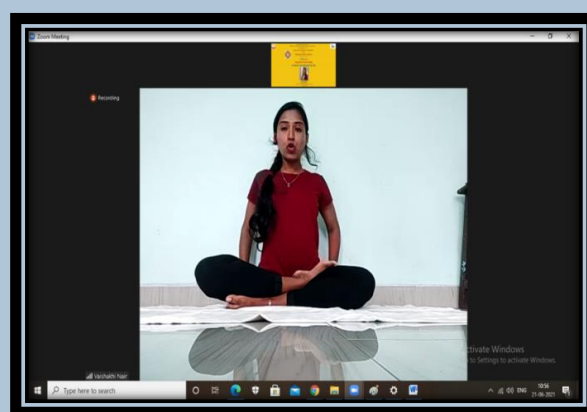
Mr. Thomas began his session by speaking about the ill effects of stress and anxiety and the damage they can cause to the body. He encouraged all to practice meditation and mindfulness to create balance in one's life.

He demonstrated some yoga exercises to boost immunity and improve wellbeing. He emphasised the importance of practicing them regularly to reduce stress and create mindfulness.

The session was attended by 40 participants.



On the occasion of International Yoga Day, Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC), in association with the Women Development Cell of Pillai HOC College of Arts, Science and Commerce College, Rasayani, and Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) had organized a webinar on “Yoga for Well-Being” for staff and students on 21st June 2021, from 9.30 am-10.30 am through online zoom platform. Ms. Tisha and Ms. Vaikashi Nair were the resources persons for the day. They explained the origin, importance, and precise way of yoga to balance life. They also explained the contrary implications of yoga. Various breathing techniques such as mudras and asanas were practised in the session. E- Certificates were issued to all those who participated in the event. A total of 452 participants attended this event.

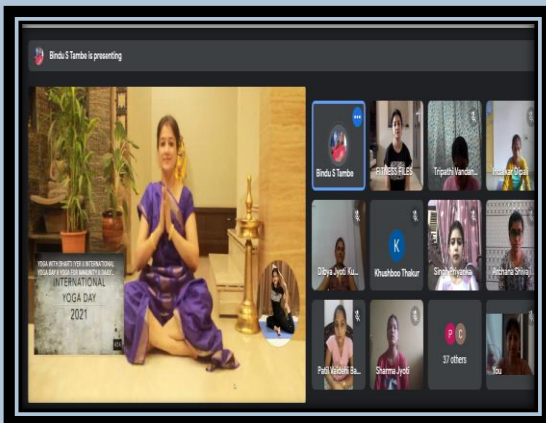


Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC), in collaboration with all the centres of the edukidz INTERNATIONAL Preschool chain, conducted Kids' Yoga to mark the occasion of 'The International Yoga Day' on 21st June 2021. Yoga expert and wellness coach Ms. Supriya Mali from OJASWI Yog and Wellness centre was invited to conduct KID'S YOGA using child-friendly activities and games.

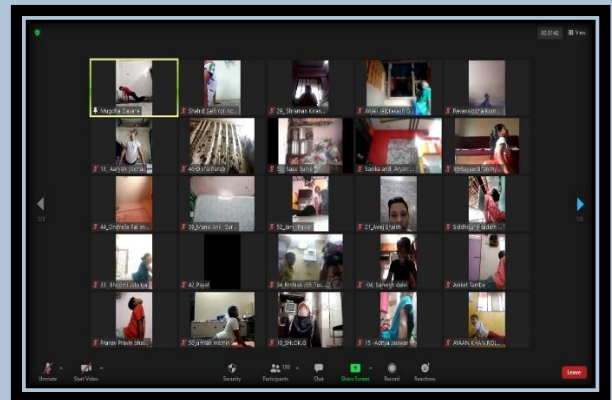
The session was for around 45 minutes for approximately 40 toddlers of edukidz INTERNATIONAL and their siblings attended the session. The total audience reached through this activity was 60 kids. The session focused on leading a healthy and positive lifestyle with the help of yoga.



Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC) collaborated with MES' Pillai College of Education and Research, New Panvel, to mark the 'The International Yoga Day' on 21st June 2021. Certified Yoga instructor Ms. Bharti Iyer was invited as the expert for the session. She conducts various workshops for kids and adults alike. She also organizes workshops for organizations and institutions.



Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC), in collaboration with Chembur English High School virtually celebrated the International Yoga Day on 21st June 2021 with much enthusiasm. The resource person, Ms. Mugdha Davane, a Masters in Yogasana explained to the students about the innumerable benefits of Yoga. She displayed various Yoga asanas like Suryanamaskara, Tadasana, Chakrasana etc. and the students followed her. Principal and Soroptimist Ms. Preeti Pawar encouraged the students to practice regular yoga to remain fit and improve concentration.



NASI PROJECT- ASHA



Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC) flagged off the National Project ASHA in July 2021. During the COVID times, street vendors/small businesses have been significantly impacted. Most people are shopping online with the result that street vendors like vegetable/fruit/flower vendors and small-time businesswomen are having a challenging time running their homes. Through this project, we hope to assist them in a small way to have working capital to buy goods.

The club donated money to two women who were shortlisted from 6 women interviewed by our members. The amount donated will help them purchase the required material to restart their business.

The two women selected are Latha and Rupali. Latha is a vegetable vendor who had to stop selling vegetables in societies due to Covid restrictions. Rupali is a massage professional who could not continue her services due to the lockdown. She will use the funds to purchase massage equipment like steam machines and oils and also purchase an apron and uniform to have a more professional look and upgrade herself.



Please see the interview with the candidate on –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsUPfMNGkTc>

**We are excited to announce that we now have
our own YouTube Channel**

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNN5A8fe3mawVOg9TicTK_Q

PLEASE FOLLOW AND SUBSCRIBE!!!

SDG's COVERED IN OUR PROJECTS



INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP AND GOODWILL



FRIENDSHIP LINK MEETING

A meeting on Zoom platform was conducted with members of SI Llandudno, friendship link of SI Bombay Chembur, on 12th January, 2021. Members of both clubs introduced each other, and discussions on activities of both clubs were held. Both clubs also explored the various possibilities for collaboration in their activities. Ms. Madhu Chako of SI Llandudno donated Rs. 5,000/- towards the tree plantation project.



OBITUARY



Dr. Madumitha Chatterjee of SI Bombay Chembur (SIBC) passed away on 6th October, 2020 after a long battle with Covid-19. She had a Ph.D in Computer Engineering from the prestigious IIT, Mumbai. She was the Principal of Pillai HOCL College of Science and Technology. She was a dedicated Soroptimist and had spearheaded the "Girls in Tech" project of the club.

May her soul rest in peace...

MEMBER ACHIEVEMENTS



UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON STATUS OF WOMEN CSW 65

Dr. Daphne Pillai, Founder President of Soroptimist Welfare Association (SIBC), was invited to speak at the United Nations Commission on Status of Women CSW 65 on the topic "Women in Leadership: Faith's Perspective" organized by the National Board of Catholic Women (NBCW) which is a body of United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

This session is now available on the following link-
<https://daphnepillai.com/nbcw-csw-65/>



Ms. Preeti Pawar was appointed as the Principal of Chembur English High School, Mumbai

Congratulations!

WHY I AM A SOROPTIMIST!!



Dr. Celina Joy – Past President (2016-18)

Soroptimism has helped me find my innate calling for social service. In this context, I would like to share my childhood experiences. My early years were shaped by the kind deeds of my parents and grandmother. Our home in Mumbai was a place for our distant relatives and friends from Kerala to stay for a day or two before they flew to the Gulf in search of greener pastures. Every visitor was welcomed with open arms, fed to their hearts content and sent away with a bit of pocket money and some essentials to tide over the initial days in a distant land. Our childhood was a mixture of carefree but tough days under the microscopic eyes of our strict and loving grandmother. As a devout Christian, she instilled the values of love, honesty, charity and forgiveness in us. We saw our working parents as role models who would share their experiences with us at dinnertime each day. Finances were a concern with dad and mom having to support extended families back in Kerala. Mom was in the government service. Dad was one of the founders of The Indian Coffee Workers Co-operative Society that was in the business of running a Coffee House in Chembur. Dad always spoke to us about "the collective good of society". It is much later that I realised the meaning of this as I understood the structure of a cooperative society that enabled the profits to be shared by all workers of the society. Through their acts and deeds, we understood selflessness and the spirit of giving.

Life flew by. I completed a stint of 16 years in the corporate sector after my studies. In my second innings I joined Mahatma Education Society and through it, met Dr. Daphne Pillai, our enigmatic Founder President of SIBC. She introduced me to Soroptimism in 2011 and having attended a few meetings, I suddenly realised my calling. I took to Soroptimism like a fish to water. The vision, mission, goals of Soroptimism enthused me and the dormant fire of doing something for society since childhood came alive in my heart. Even though I had always practiced random acts of giving it is through Soroptimism that I found the vehicle to truly understand the meaning of "collective good of society". It has given me an opportunity to be part of the "The Power of a Second Chance" a project very close to my heart. I attended a Soroptimist International conference in Turkey where I witnessed nearly 1500 Soroptimists around the world carrying the flame of Soroptimism by their deeds, action and advocacy to make the world a better place for women and girls. Over the last decade I had the opportunity of being a part of organising donation campaigns, writing project reports, lending financial support, and practicing sustainable giving through teaching, writing research papers, evaluating the outcomes/impact of giving and much more.

I continue to carry the torch of Soroptimism. Together WE CAN!

UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROJECTS

Village Adoption Project- Long term Project

International Literacy Day- September 8, 2021

International Day of Peace -September 21, 2021

World Habitat Day- October 4, 2021

World Mental Health Day-October 10, 2021

International Day of the Girl Child- October 11, 2021

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty- October 17, 2021

DID YOU KNOW?

- *The Soroptimist pledge was written in 1927 by Candis Nelson, a charter member of the Seattle, WA club.*
- *At the first World Conference of Soroptimist clubs held in Washington, DC in 1927, a decision was made to adopt the Soroptimist emblem for the members. Mrs Anita Houts Thompson, a founder member, whose Soroptimist classification was “designing and engraving”, submitted an emblem design, in competition with others, which was adopted as the official Soroptimist Emblem.*



The success of every woman should be the inspiration to another. We should raise each other up. Make sure you're very courageous: be strong, be extremely kind, and above all be humble.

— *Serena Williams* —

AZ QUOTES