

SASAC – NEWS (OCTOBER– DECEMBER 2025)



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MESSAGE OF PEACE IN A WORLD WOUNDED BY VIOLENCE

As we prepare our hearts for the holy season of Advent, we are once again confronted with the painful reality of senseless violence in our world. The recent shooting in California — where a child’s second birthday celebration was shattered by gunfire, leaving multiple dead and many injured — forces us to ask a heartbreaking question: **What crime had that innocent toddler committed?**

He had done nothing more than **be born**, nothing more than gather with loved ones to celebrate the gift of life. It is a stark

reminder of how deeply violence has penetrated our human existence. Around the world, conflicts rage, lives are lost, and fear too often becomes a daily companion. One may feel that humanity has accepted violence as the only language we know.

But Advent calls us to **lift our eyes beyond the darkness**, to refuse despair, and to remember that God offers another way. On the First Sunday of Advent, we hear the timeless and hope-filled words of the prophet Isaiah:

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord... He will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths...

They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;

nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” — Isaiah 2:3–4

It is **God’s dream for humanity**, a dream entrusted to us — that weapons may one day be transformed into tools of life, that hatred may give way to reconciliation, and that peace may flourish where violence reigned. Advent reminds us that **God enters our world not with power or weapons, but as a vulnerable child**. In the face of brutality, God responds with tenderness. In a world of fear, He brings hope. In a season overshadowed by loss, He calls us to become bearers of light.

Let us, then, carry Isaiah’s prophecy in our hearts. Let us pray for the victims of all violence, for grieving families, and for communities scarred by tragedy. Let us also pray for the courage to become instruments of peace — in our homes, our neighborhoods, and our world.

As we journey toward Christmas, may Jesus, the Prince of peace renew our hope, heal our wounds, and strengthen our resolve to say, “war no more.”

Come, Lord Jesus. Bring your light into our darkness. Bring your peace into our world.

-Fr. Pramod Dabhi SJ

SASAC Introduces Malta Cultivation in the Hills



Promoting sustainable agriculture and new opportunities for hill farmers

SASAC continues its commitment to environmental preservation and livelihood enhancement through active tree plantation efforts across the Kurseong hills. This year marks an exciting milestone as the organization introduced **Malta**, a citrus fruit variety known for its resilience and rich nutritional value, as a new potential crop for hill farmers.

In a recent initiative, SASAC distributed **200 Malta saplings** to farmers from surrounding villages. The decision was inspired by the favorable climatic conditions of Kurseong, which have long supported thriving orange plantations. Given the similarities in climate and soil requirements, Malta is expected to do equally well—if not better—in this region.

The response from the farming community has been overwhelmingly positive. Many farmers, who had never heard of Malta before, expressed great curiosity and excitement about the possibilities this fruit tree could bring. Beyond adding diversity to local agriculture, Malta cultivation may open new avenues for income generation in the future.

As these saplings take root, SASAC looks forward to monitoring their growth and supporting farmers through guidance, training, and continued plantation drives. The initiative stands as a small but significant step toward a greener Kurseong and a more diverse agricultural landscape.

A Joyful Visit to Theba



Fr. Pramod, along with other co-workers from Woodcot, recently visited Theba at Takhdah. Theba, a deaf and mute person, had come to Woodcot, Sepoydhura, as a destitute nearly 25 years ago during the time of Fr. Abraham. Over the years, he became a familiar and cherished presence there.

At present, Theba is lovingly cared for by the Missionaries of Charity (MC) Sisters at Takhdah. During the visit, he welcomed everyone with his characteristic cheerfulness and warmth. Though unable to hear or speak, Theba communicated effortlessly through his expressive gestures and lively enactments of incidents, often engaging people for long periods.

Undoubtedly, Theba is one of the happiest persons one could come across on the campus—his joy, simplicity, and ability to connect with others continue to inspire all who meet him.



Empowering Farmers through Training and Pig Distribution:



SASAC successfully organized a training and pig distribution program for local farmers with the aim of promoting sustainable livelihoods. As part of the initiative, all the pigs were provided with proper medical care, including swine flu vaccination, to ensure a high survival rate and to support healthy and faster growth.

In addition to the distribution, SASAC guided the farmers in forming a pig cooperative society, enabling them to access government loans and subsidies more easily. This collective approach is expected to strengthen their economic security and encourage better farming practices.

The farmers expressed great happiness and gratitude for this opportunity, which has opened new avenues for income generation and self-reliance within the community.



SUPER NAPIER GRASS FOR ASSAM: CARPENTER TRAINING:



A Warm Welcome to Dr. Anand and Dr. Saha

SASAC was delighted to warmly welcome Dr. Anand, accompanied by his classmate and friend Dr. Saha, along with his family. Dr. Anand has been rendering his invaluable services to Jesu Ashram for the past 20 years. He is a deeply caring and dedicated person, with a special concern for the poor and the destitute. His free and selfless medical service extends to many rural areas, including remote villages around the Kurseong Hills. He is always eager to support and participate in our rural medical camps.

I, personally have experienced lots of love and concern from Dr. Anand. He has been a great friend and guide to me for more than 15 years. His life is very inspiring for me. He is a person with open mind and open heart. He is now slowly aging, but his spirit is still very high. I always felt privileged having known and worked very closely with a person like him.

Dr. Saha, who is also associated with several charitable organizations, shares a similar spirit of service and compassion, providing free medical support to those in need. Ms. Saha, his wife retired from a teaching profession, a very renowned teacher, coming from a very patriotic family.

We always cherish their visits, as their presence brings not only professional expertise but also warmth, humour, and a wealth of knowledge that enriches everyone around them.



FAREWELL MESSAGE:

As we come to the close of the year 2025, we are invited to pause and give thanks to God for His abundant blessings. As I reflect on this year—and on my past six years at SASAC—my heart is filled with deep gratitude, not only for God’s grace, but also for the many experiences and relationships that have enriched my journey here.

As many of you are aware, I will soon be moving on to a new assignment in Pokhara, Nepal. From **01 February 2026**, **Fr. John Kennedy** will be taking over my responsibilities. Therefore, this will be my final edition of the **SASAC Newsletter** to all our readers and friends. I am confident that Fr. John will continue to keep you updated on our activities and will guide this mission with dedication, wisdom, and a deep sense of commitment.

Working at SASAC, and spending time in **Woodcot and Chimney**, has been a truly meaningful chapter of my life. These years have taught me so much—especially in the fields of agriculture and animal husbandry. The knowledge and skills I have gained here will surely serve me well in my new ministry.

I take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to my team of co-workers and my Jesuit companions,

who have stood by me through thick and thin. Your hard work, cooperation, and unwavering support made every challenge easier and every success possible.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to **CJI**, and to all our dear well-wishers and benefactors whose generosity has sustained this organization. Your continued support has been a great blessing, and I trust that you will remain steadfast as Fr. John takes the steering wheel.

Thank you all for your kindness, prayers, and companionship. You will remain in my thoughts and prayers as I embark on my new mission to serve the differently-abled children of Nepal. May God bless each one of you abundantly.

This Christmas, my heart is filled with gratitude for the years shared in the **SASAC mission**, where together we sought to find God in all things—especially in our work with the land and people entrusted to us. As I move forward, I carry you all in my prayers. May the Lord of the mission continue to bless you richly in the New Year.

A blessed Christmas and a hope-filled New Year.

-Fr Pramod Dabhi



(FR JOHN KENNEDY, NEW DIRECTOR OF SASAC)