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## 1. Madhuban Sri Aurobindo Ashram- Delhi Branch: April 2023-March2024

We are a chapter of Sri Aurobindo Ashram- Delhi Branch nestled in the Kumaon Region. We are constantly aspiring to be worthy of the mandate given to us by The Mother.

Sharing our journey at Madhuban from April 2023 to March 2024

### 1) Construction and Maintenance:

The cloud burst two years back has its impact till date and in context of it construction and maintenance has continued.

#### i. Retaining walls below 'Prabhu Sthal' and Kitchen:



#### ii. Welding for railings, arches and repairing work near kitchen:





iii. Net poly-houses: repairing, creating new wire net coverings to protect from monkeys and langoors:



iv. Basketball field: wire mesh renewing work:



v. Carpentry: Repairing work at 'Pragati':



vi. Door repair work in 'Sadasukh':



vii. Repair work in 'Samvit':



2) Project Haryali:

- i. The Environment management and awareness initiative of the Madhuban Sri Aurobindo Ashram demonstrated the feasibility of farming, horticulture and floriculture as well as development of certain agro-products (such as jam, chutneys and pickles) as sustainable and eco-friendly livelihood options for women and young people in the Talla Ramgarh district.



*"Khushali" women's learning from Lab to Land Agriculture*

The goals of the initiative were to:

- Demonstrate a “lab-to-land” approach to organic farming.
- Encourage young people (interns and villagers) as well as women from the “Khushali” Livelihoods program to work in the Ashram farms
- Develop a compendium of observations and recommendations on organic farming practices.



*Demonstration of organic farming using Lab to Land approach*

### The table below lists farming at khet and polyhouse:

VEGETABLES, HERBS FRUITS AND FLOWERS GROWN AT MADHUBAN – LAB TO LAND INITIATIVE SO AS TO FAMILIARISE THE VILLAGE TO ENCOURAGE MULTI CROPPING- ADDING HERBS WHICH ARE NOT DESTROYED BY THE MONKEYS AND LANGURS

Khet/Field No. Polyhouse	What is grown in the lab to land programme for village-wide adoption.
Khet no.1	Herbs: Chives, Oregano, Lemon balm and Parsley-
Khet No. 2	Potato, beans, radish, rosemary
Khet No. 3 Polyhouse	Coriander, red amaranth, Since this too is a polyhouse the seeds of Tomato, Lettuce, Brinjal and Cherry Tomato (red) are germinated in the beds
Khet No. 4	Organic Peas
Khet No. 5	Apple and walnut. Garlic
Khet no. 6 Polyhouse	Swiss chard, Lettuce, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Broccoli, Spinach. Capsicum and Pumpkin.
Khet no.7	Onion
Khet no. 8& 9	Peas
Patch near car park	Garlic
Polyhouse	Basil, Lavender, Lemon balm, Sage and Rocket are being germinated in the polyhouse
Upper hillside	Rosemary 105 saplings have been planted on the upper side hill two

plantation – ‘Helipad’	beds on the way to the helipad.
Other vegetables/lentil grown	Karela, Sponge gourd, Red Capsicum, Cherry Tomato (Yellow), Cucumber, Ornamental Chilly, Laal Saag (amaranth) and Green Chilli, Onion, Beans, Lady Finger, Potato, Rajma
Fruits	Apple and kiwi as experiments for seeing the possibility of growing new fruit
Spring plantation at Madhuban gardens for our own personal landscape and to inspire the village community for floriculture	The following bulbs have been planted in suitable pots and areas: 1. 114 assorted varieties of Liliiums/ Lilies in 19 pots. 2. 06 Rananculus in 01 pot. 3. 07 Peony in 02 pots. 4. 24 Liliiums in 06 pots. All the pots were adequately identifiable and placed in well-lit as well as in shaded area.

- **Growing of herbs, salads and floriculture was the emphasis so that these products become a source of earning in villages. The Madhuban Ashram Environment Program advocated eco-friendly, agro-products based sustainable livelihoods toward long-term goals of preventing migration, promoting good health and income generation.**
- **Saplings and seeds were given to local farmers and training imparted in growing herbs and flowers, especially hardy, local varieties.**

Most of the produce from our ashram khets are used for showing the possibility of multi-cropping and organic farming in the area

Produce is used by the ashram kitchen and the women of “Khushali” are also involved in the process.



*Buransh flowers(Rhododendron)*



*Village women helping Madhuban Ashram sadhak's by sorting Buransh flowers*

**ii. Flowers in Madhuban:**

Madhuban has a wide variety of flowers that bloom throughout the year and are nurtured with care by garden 'sadhak's'. The Mother had given spiritual names to flowers and Tara didi had been an instrument for the work, flowers in Madhuban are an offering to Her Grace.

In the year many sadhak's from all over the world have brought seeds and bulbs to be sown in our fertile soil.



*Ping pong allium*



*Water lilly*



*Tulips*



*Wisteria*



*Plum blossoms*



*Cherry*



*Alstroemeria*



*Peach blossoms*



*Cherry Blossoms*



*Jasmine*



*Foxglove*



*Rose creeper*



*Chinese roses*



*English roses*



*Yellow Poppy*



*Hyacinth*



*Daffodils*



*Deer Bursh*



*Gardern Nasturtium*

**iii. Fruits and vegetables:**

Fruits are grown in the orchards of Madhuban and vegetables flourish in the Playhouses and the Khet.



*Apricots and Apples growing at Madhuban orchids*



*Abundance in the khet, polyhuse and orchids: Pear plantation, tomatoes and Red Amarnath*

**iv. Grey Water Harvesting:**

A waste water recycling project was started at Madhuban. A structure was developed to save and recycle waste water for use in the Khets of the Ashram. If the model is successful then we will implement it in the Talla Ramgarh villages also.



*Initial Meeting with Prashant and Amar singh for choosing the location and material needs for the Grey Water Harvesting site.*



*Grey water harvesting site- under the dining area to reuse water used for washing dishes*

## **2. Spiritual Shivirs:**

Madhuban hosted -spiritual shivir for aspirants and seekers who want to connect to their inner rhythm of calm; the ashram beauty beckons all to take a pause and observe themselves away from the clutter of city life.

- The purpose of these shivir is for people to come and experience Sri Aurobindo and The Mother's grace and for each person to experience the beauty and quietude of the Ashram.
- Stay at Madhuban includes routines for sattvic meal timings, meditation, shramdan and yoga.

The following shivir were held from April 2023 – to March 2024:

**1. SHIVIR FOR STUDENTS FROM MOTHER'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL:**

- It was an opportunity for city bred children to be in touch with Ashram living and connect to village terrain and school children.
- A second Shivir for another batch of students followed with the same routine as above



*Students trek to the river bed*



*Students offering prayers at Prashanti hall*



*Students playing basketball at the Sada Sukh court*



*Children doing art at Madhuban Ashram*

## **2. SHIVIR BY CHINMAYA MISSION:**

- 'sadhaks' participated in listening to discourses and sessions that were intense and reflective for their inner journey.



*Swamiji Chidrupanandji lighting lamp*



*Swamiji addressing devotees at shivir by Chinmaya Mission*

### 3. AYURVEDA SHIVIR:

- Delhi Ashram Integral health Centre led by Dr. Katoch held sessions and therapies, along with ashram routines.



*Prabhat ferri at Madhuban ashram by devotees*



*Acharya Navneet taking a session at the Ayurveda Shivir*



*Havan conducted as part of Ayurveda Shivar*

#### **4. TAI-CHI SHIVIR:**

- Tai-Chi Shivar was conducted by Sensei Sandeep Desai, this Shivar connected people to both physical and mental health of each participant.



*Tai-Chi in progress with Sensei Sandeep Desai*



*Participants at Tai-Chi Shivar*

**5. “SHIVIR ON SOUNDARYA AUR ANAND” VEDON SE SAVITRI TAK,- Dr. Muralidhar Chandaniwalan, Dr. Ritam Upadhyay**

Participants of this Shivar read from the Bhagvad Gita and other religious texts. They also read from Sri Aurobindo’s epic poem Savitri and engaged in reflective practices.

**6. ART SHIVIR:**

The Shivar’s inspiration is The Mother who was an avid painter and musician

This art shivar brought together senior artists and a younger group who enjoyed painting the flora and fauna in the scenic beauty of Madhuban.



*Artists Kavita Nayar and Dattatreya Apte conducting an arts workshop*

**7. STUDENTS SHIVIR -MATRI KIRAN SCHOOL:**

Group activities, on observation and reflection were conducted as part of the shivar and children learnt to do meditation. The shivar was special as it included the 29<sup>th</sup> February- Leap Year Day special meditation.



*Art activity by children based on observation of flora and fauna*



*Visit to local school by students of Matri Kiran*



*Meditation by students at Prashanti Hall*

## **8. TELEGU SHIVIR:**

Telegu shivir held spiritual discourses, Kirtans and meditation.





Swami Anantananda ji and Anju didi conducting a session

## 9. MARGSHALA SHIVIR:

Margshala: A foundation supporting livelihoods in Uttarakhand facilitated a meeting with local women and youth at Madhuban. Their intent is to facilitate small individual entrepreneurs from the village community.



Margshala's session on Local Livelihood attended by "Khushali" women

## 10. SHIVIR FOR ATB:

A journey of self-discovery and growth unfolded through the unique blend of ATB (Awareness Through the Body) through Auroville and Art through the Delhi Ashram.

The shivir, curated with intentionality, welcomed participants from diverse backgrounds, including educators, teachers from local school and seekers of physical and inner development.

ATB activities focused on expanding participants consciousness, fostering creative expression, and empowering attention and concentration.

The ATB facilitator also conducted two days of training for village women of the “Khushali” early childcare learning initiative and work in the village schools.





*ATB Session by Amir Azouley*



*Blend of ATB and Art session by Shilpi*

## **11. HIMALAYAN YATRA:**

Dr Saraswati conducted two Shivirs, which included routines for chanting, kirtan ,havan, yoga and visits to temples.

The people who come with this group are seekers of spirituality.



*Havan by attendees at Dr. Saraswati's Shivr*



*Traditional Welcome at the "Khushali" product display*





*Attendees doing kirtan at the "Khushali" Display Mela*

### **12. SHIVIR FOR FACULTY OF VIDYA SCHOOL:**

Vidya School staff came to Madhuban for an integral living shivir.



*Session at Prashanti*

### **13. SHIVIR BY DR. SHRAVAN KUMAR:**

The group did meditation and readings from Kena Upanishad .



*Orientation session for participants*



*Group photograph of participants*

**Table showing summary of Shivars held during 2023-2024**

S.No.	DATES	Topic/Language	Facilitator	No. of persons (rooms)	No. of persons (dorms)
1.	10.05.2023 14.05.2023	SHIVIR FOR STUDENTS FROM MOTHER'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL	HIRA DAS , <a href="mailto:HIRADAS2@GMAIL.COM">HIRADAS2@GMAIL.COM</a>		50 IN DORMS BOOKED
2.	14.05.2023 18.05.2023	MOTHER'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, NEW DELHI, OLE	HIRA DAS , <a href="mailto:HIRADAS2@GMAIL.COM">HIRADAS2@GMAIL.COM</a>		50 IN DORMS BOOKED
3.	19.05.2023 25.05.2023	SHIVIR BY CHINMAYA MISSION, ENGLISH	SWAMIJI CHIDRUPANANDJI		41  BOOKED
4.	26.05.2023 01.06.2023	AYURVEDA SHIVIR, ENGLISH/HINDI	DR. SURINDER KATOCH, 9811199167  <a href="mailto:KHHCAAYURVEDA@GMAIL.COM">KHHCAAYURVEDA@GMAIL.COM</a>	30 IN ROOMS BOOKED	30  BOOKED
6.	02.06.2023 08.06.2023	VEDANTA & AYURVEDA SHIVIR, ENGLISH/HINDI	DR. SURINDER KATOCH, 9811199167  <a href="mailto:KHHCAAYURVEDA@GMAIL.COM">KHHCAAYURVEDA@GMAIL.COM</a>  ACHARYA NAVNEET, <a href="mailto:AIMSEVA@GMAIL.COM">AIMSEVA@GMAIL.COM</a>	41 IN ROOMS BOOKED	
7.	09.06.2023 15.06.2023	TAI – CHI SHIVIR	SENSEI SANDEEP DESAI	PRAGATI BOOKED	
8.	16.06.2023 22.06.2023	“SOUNDARYA AUR ANAND” VEDON SE SAVITRI TAK,  HINDI	DR. MURALIDHAR CHANDANIIWALAN  DR. RITAM UPADHYAY	40 IN ROOMS, BOOKED	
9.	23.06.2023 26.06.2023	ART SHIVIR	DALJEET WADHWA, <a href="mailto:DALJEET@SAC.AC.IN">DALJEET@SAC.AC</a> <a href="mailto:DALJEET@SAC.AC.IN">.IN</a> 9899221409	24 IN ROOMS	

10.	05.07.2023 09.07.2023	SPIRITUAL SHIVIR	MEGHA GIRDHAR		9 ROOMS IN PRAGATI 5 IN DHARA  BOOKED
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11.	20.09.2023 28.09.2023	TELEGU SHIVIR	SW. ANANTANANDA	45  BOOKED	
14.	20.10.2023 26.10.2023	HIMALAYAN YATRA	SARASWATI		

15.	29.10.2023 01.11.2023	OLE, PROGRAM	BAREN RAOUL,  9958619822  BARENMBK@GM AIL.COM	25  BOOKED	
16.	24.11.2023 27.11.2023	SHIVIR FOR FACULTY OF VIDYA SCHOOL	PRERNA, 9716189107,  PRERNA.OBEROI @VIDYAINDIA.ORG	42 BOOKED	
17.	27.02.24 02.-3.24	STUDENTS SHIVIR -MATRI KIRAN SCHOOL	DR. ANJU KHANNA	11 TEACHERS  BOOKED	47  STUDENTS
18.	11.03.24 13.03.24	MARGSHALA SHIVIR	SHARAD MER	3 BOOKED	20 BOOKED
19.	15.03.2024 25.03.2024	SHIVIR FOR ATB	AMIR AZAOLUAY	22  BOOKED	

20.	29.03.2024 05.04.2024	HIMALAYAN YATRA	DR.SARASWATI	BOOKED	
21.	05.04.2024 11.04.2024	SPIRITUAL SHIVIR	DR. SHRAVAN KUMAR		

### 3. Special Days:

#### 1) 21<sup>st</sup> February- Darshan Day and the Mother's Birth Anniversary

The Ashram celebrated The Mother as the Divine Shakti, who with Sri Aurobindo would nurture the spiritual resurgence of India as a nation. The Mother had created a world of beauty and order and those who live in Madhuban Sri Aurobindo Ashram try to follow her qualities of sincerity, beauty and order.



*Lights of Aspiration on The Mother's Birth Anniversary*



*Special Meditation*

## 2) 28<sup>th</sup> February-Day of the Supramental Manifestation

Special meditation was held on the Leap Year. The children from Matri Kiran School celebrated by singing a song on Sri Aurobindo's early life.



*Song by the children of Matri Kiran*

## 3) 29<sup>th</sup> March- Mother's First arrival in Pondicherry

To commemorate the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mother's first arrival in Pondicherry, the Ashram held evening meditation.





*Special Evening Meditation on The Mother's first arrival in Pondicherry*

4) **4<sup>th</sup> April- 114<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo's arrival in Pondicherry**

The day was observed by 'sadhaks' light lamps signifying the Light of Aspiration. Prayers to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were offered in the beautiful gardens and in the serene surroundings of the Prashanti hall. The Ashram was filled with a sense of reverence and unity as Ashramites and participants from the Himalyan Shivr gathered to pay homage to the Master.



*Prasad lunch and Satsang for 114<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sri Aurobindo's arrival in Pondicherry*

- 5) **24<sup>th</sup> April-Darshan Day:** Commemoration of The Mother's final arrival in Pondicherry. Meditation with The Mother's music and a flute recital by volunteer marked this important occasion.



*Celebrations included lamplighting, flute recital...*



*...and meditation at Prabhu Sthal*

- 6) **7<sup>th</sup> June-Relics Enshrinement Day at Madhuban**

It began with the reading by Tara didi and lights of aspirations in the evening as a part of the celebrations.



*Prabhu Sthal that houses the sacred relics of Sri Aurobindo at Madhuban*



*Reading by Tara didi followed by Lights of Aspiration*



*Gathering at Prashanti Hall*



*Prasad lunch at Madhuban Ashram*

**7) 13<sup>th</sup> August-Birth Anniversary of Shri Surendra Nath Jauhar 'Faquir'- Our Chacha ji**

The children of the village gathered at Prashanti Hall and listened to the stories of 'chacha ji' and then drew pictures of their village and it's environs. The former Gram Pradhan distributed scholarships to eligible students.



*Sit and draw by village children*



*Meditation by children*



*Scholarship distribution by former Gram Pradhan Shri Basant Lal Sah, Bohrakot*



8) 15 August-Darshan Day: Sri Aurobindo's birth anniversary

The day began with a march past by sadaks and village women. Flag hoisting at Prabhu Sthal was also done. The day concluded with lights of aspiration and meditation.



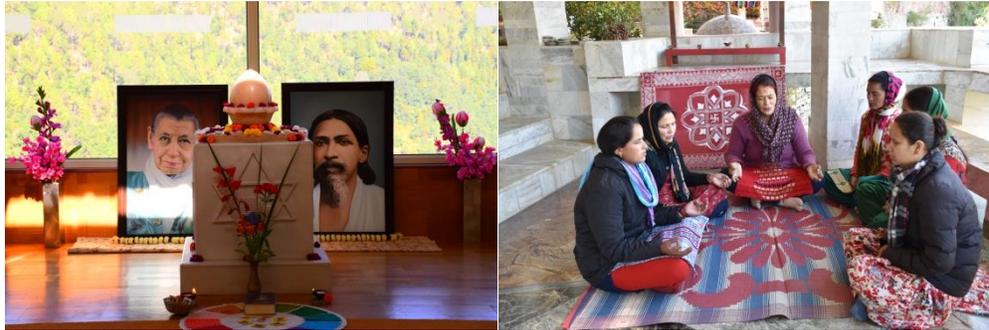
*March past followed by Lights of Aspiration*



*Flag hosting and singing of Sri Aurobindo's 'Bande Mataram'*

### 9) 24<sup>th</sup> November-Darshan Day and Siddhi Day

Siddhi day was observed by meditation with women from the “Khushali” Livelihood’s Program.



*Silent meditation by women from the “Khushali” Livelihoods Program*

### 10) 5<sup>th</sup> December-Sri Aurobindo's Mahasamadhi Day

Lamps were lit at the ashram; visitors and ‘sadhaks’ did collective silent meditation in the evening of that day.



*Day of Silence day at the ashram followed by evening meditation*

## 4. Village Outreach-

### 1) Madhuban “Khushali” Livelihoods Program’

- Based on our village level survey on 2016 we have made an attempt to implement Sri Aurobindo’s 5 Dreams and Three Principles of Education under a program called “Village ‘Khushali’” where we continue to work with the entire village community to transform village development.
- Madhuban Sri Aurobindo Ashram has acted as an enabler – providing raw materials and skills training for women to bring to the forefront the skills and traditional wisdom that they already possessed as part of their integral material culture. The Ashram has thus acted as a catalyst in the process of growth and change that has taken place within “Khushali” over the years.

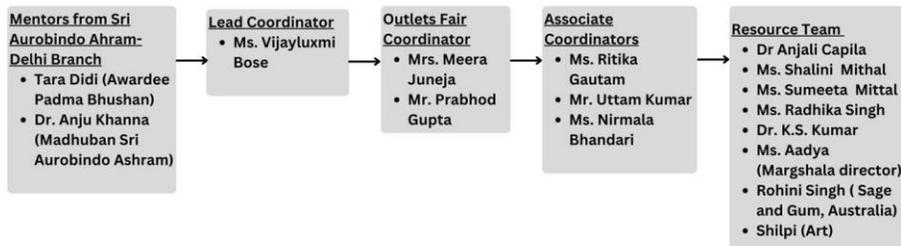


**KHUSHALI LIVELIHOODS PROGRAM TRAINED BY  
MADHUBAN SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM- DELHI BRANCH**



*Do not pretend- Be.  
Do not promise- act  
Do not dream- Realize  
-The Mother*

**KHUSHALI'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**



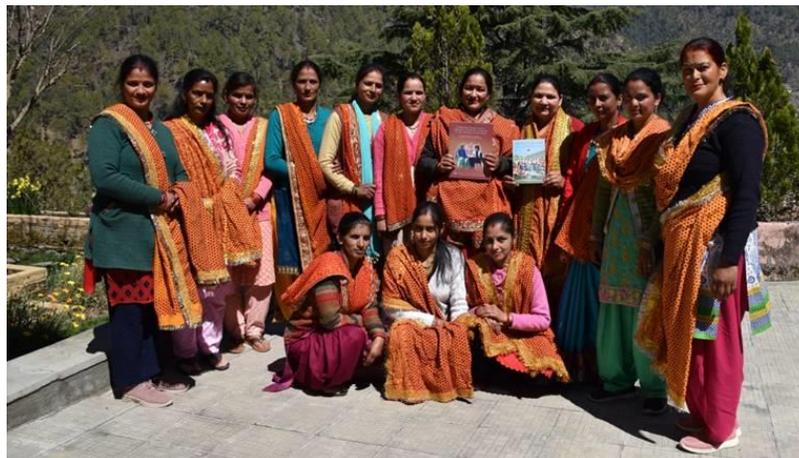
- “Khushali” has grown from setting up small stalls within the Ashram to exhibit to devotees and visitors, to participating in the Diwali Mela at the Blind School in Delhi and the HCL and Microsoft fairs at NOIDA and Gurgaon respectively as well as fairs at local cafes at Bhimtal and Gagar.
- “Khushali” has two kinds of fairs (melas) one that demonstrates the interlinkage between three principles in primary education, teacher education and livelihoods called Integral Living and the other is a display of products by the ‘Khushali’ team leaders.
- ‘Khushali’ already has a separate bank account and is now sourcing raw materials from Mumbai and Delhi for knitting and crochet and also getting international orders.



‘Khushali’ at Noida and Delhi for display mela



*"Khushali" women at work during a mela*



*"Khushali" team leaders and group members owning the Madhuban publications about them*

## **2) Internships:**

The internship programme has two components facilitated by Madhuban Ashram –

- Curriculum of the institution which sends students to the ashram are supplemented by our village outreach program. The students experience a day in the life of village women, children and youth through techniques of Rapid Rural Assessment and transect walks. Village home and field visits are blended with the curriculum requirements of each Institution who visit us.



*Faculty leading the transact walk*



*Students from Carleton, walking through what was- once a flowing river*



*Group photo at Manju didi's home*

- We also worked on each student experiencing Integral living by our focus on sessions specially curated for them to observe, reflect and find me time for themselves and their inner ecology with techniques like sharing circles , writing a journal , meditation and nature self - reflective walks.

From April 2023- March 2024 students from - following institutions have visited and worked with us and have had immersive experiences:

1. Carleton University, -USA
2. Indian Institute of crafts and designs, -Jaipur
3. Auro University, -Surat

4. Michigan State University -USA
5. Lady Irwin college -Delhi
6. GB Pant Agriculture and Technology University – Pant Nagar

### 1. Carleton University, -USA

Students from Carleton University, USA visited Madhuban Ashram from 19<sup>th</sup> February to 22<sup>nd</sup> February. They participated in a concurrent evaluation- study of ‘Khushali’ wherein they interviewed women leaders. They also engaged in circle time with school children and attended ‘Khushali’ team leaders meeting. Along with working on their self - reflection journal.



*Interns participating in research and ‘Khushali’ Mela*



*Interns participating in activities at local schools*

### 2. Indian Institute of Crafts and Design- Jaipur:

The director of Indian Institute of Crafts and Designs visited Madhuban and shared design ideas with ‘Khushali’ team leaders. Subsequently an intern were also placed at Madhuban to help train women in selection of wool colors and designs for the Knitting vertical.



*Director Indian Institute of Craft & Design at 'Khushali' Mela*

### **3. Auro University Surat:**

Interns from the Auro University School of Design visited Madhuban as part of their summer school and related study program. 17 students and 3 faculty members experienced ashram life, focused on self-growth, understanding themselves and through Participatory Rural Assessment received a glimpse of village life. They also interacted with the 'Khushali' women and shared their thoughts on livelihood.



*Field visit by interns*



*Interns at an Auro Utsav stall*



*Presentation by the interns*

#### **4. Michigan State University –USA:**

Students from Michigan State University accompanied by two faculty members visited Madhuban. They interacted with the 'Khushali' women at Sada Sukh. The students admired the serenity of Madhuban during the walk through the ashram and also attended a session on TREC study on Community Perspectives on Education, Health and Livelihoods.



*Traditional welcome by 'Khushali' women*



*Interactive session with 'Khushali' women*



*Dr Anjali Capila in a discussion with interns*

## 5. Lady Irwin College –Delhi:

Lady Irwin college graduates facilitated and documented the 'Khushali' Livelihoods Project.



*Interns interaction*



*Intern Shruti being facilitated for meditation at Prabhu Sthal*

## 6. GB Pant Agriculture and Technology University – Pant Nagar:

67 boys and 45 girls from the final year students (B.Sc Agriculture) from GB Pant University of Agriculture and Technology at Pantnagar came to Madhuban, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, from October to December 2023, in three batches.

They visited the homes of 'Khushali' Women and interacted with them and the 'sadhaks' of the Ashram farms and orchards.

Through demonstrations and discussions, they imparted advice on integrated farming practices, organic farming, horticulture, drip irrigation and ways of protecting their fields from depredations by wild animals.



*Research and demonstration for our Lab to Land project*



*Post a session facilitated by Dr. Bijlani*

### **3) Project Early Childcare Learning (ECLC)**

- The canvas in which the village children are, is very different from a city bred child. Children observe what they engage with like the cattle at home, the flora and the fauna that grow around them, the birds in

their area and the changing vistas of the river when it is dry v/s when it is following.

- We realized that working with primary school teachers and children would influence their inner ecology and strengthen their relationship with their environment.
- Early Childcare Learning provides regular Saturday, Sunday and holiday time learning classes with emphasis on children forming a relationship with their home and village as part of their education in an integral manner.
- Children do physical exercises, minor games, participate in environment awareness i.e *Mera Gao Mera Gourav* facilitated by our in-house team, peer educators, volunteers and people from our resource pool.



*Physical education for The Body*



*Art education for The Vital*



*Sharing and meditative circles*



*Children mapping their village using the Third Principle- 'From near to the far'*



*Children sharing their emotions through a play at the Government- Raajkiya Prathmik Vidhaylay, Talla Ramgarh*





*Children engaging with visitors from Himalyan Yatra*

- There was a special session on ATB specifically for local school teachers. These sessions were attended by 12 teachers from schools and 3 peer educators from The Teacher Resource and Education Centre trained by Madhuban Sri Aurobindo Ashram.



*ATB for Teachers from Arohi, Government Primary School, Sunrise and ECLC peer educators*



*ATB and Art participation by school teachers and resource persons*

#### 4) Youth Engagement

- Local youth are mentored at Madhuban Ashram.

- By providing livelihood pathways that are sustainable and in sync with the village ecosystem and their own swadharma – we try to address ‘palayen’ (migration).
- Computer classes are held regularly at the Ashram Computer Centre.



*Students from nearby villages attending classes*



*Students from the local government school/intercollege attending computer classes at Madhuban*

- Integrated Youth Shivar was held for students from Prayagraj from 23<sup>rd</sup> March’23 to 29<sup>th</sup> March’23 in Madhuban. Sessions on group dynamics and communication with issues on local environment and knowing oneself and reflecting on one’s aim in life- through the lens of The Mother’s quality of sincerity was conducted. Integral part of this engagement was Shramdaan, Sports and evening Meditation



*Treks by the students from Prayagraj*



*Reflective session by Anju didi and Vijayluxmi didi*



*Games at Sada Sukh*



*Cultural event at Prashanti Hall*

## 5) Collaboration:

- Margshala Foundation has approached Madhuban Ashram with a proposal to create sustainable rural livelihood by engaging local youths who will stay in the villages and contribute to village development.
- The proposed collaboration aims at supporting 'Khushali' women by providing training to youth of the village.
- Youth from class 12<sup>th</sup> and Colleges were contacted and informed about the importance of entrepreneurship and livelihoods.
- Subsequently, a one on one discussion with students of the computer classes at Madhuban was held and a group discussion with village youth on livelihoods and entrepreneurship were conducted.



*Khojshala session by Margshala with Village youth*



*One on one session with computer students and group discussion with girls from village school*

**6) Volunteers for shramdaan:**

Many of those who attend shivirs, come back to the ashram for internships or for volunteering in Madhuban; offer shramdaan in the khets, Kitchen and gardens. The volunteers also offer their skills like music , art ,story telling , mapping the village resources , English classes to the village schools and this forms a symbiotic relationship between the village and the ashram.



*Painting the Ashram premises and sessions with children by volunteers*



*Visitors offering Shramdaan in Madhuban kitchen*

**7) Scholarships of children:**

**Madhuban Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch, Talla Ramgarh  
Scholarship Details Year 2023-2024**

S.N	Name of Parent	Occupation	No of children / family	Amount per year
1	Geeta Bisht	Housewife	2	1500 each = 30000
2	Asha Fartyal	Housewife	2	1500 each = 30000
3	Lakshmi Dutt bhatt	Daily wage labourer	2	1500 each = 30000
4	Deepa Fartyal	Housewife	2	1500 each = 30000
5	Sonu Halsi	Housewife	1	15000
6	Parvati joshi	Housewife	2	1500 each = 30000
7	Lalu yadav	Gardner	1	1500
8	Anita Pandey	Housewife	2	1500 each = 30000
9	Maya Fartyal	Housewife	2	1500 each = 30000
10	Sunita Mer	House wife	2	1500 each = 30000
11	Bhavna Suyal	Housewife	2	1500 each = 30000
12	Bhopal Ram	Daily wage labourer	2	1500 each = 30000

#### 5. Visitors at Madhuban:

Groups of visitors from India and various other countries, devotees groups, individuals and families visit Madhuban. Those attending shivirs at Van Niwas Ashram also visit Madhuban to pay homage to Sri Aurobindo and The Mother and enjoy scenic views.

Visitors add to the outreach work of Madhuban Ashram

- 1) Aspirants from the sourcing our oneness Shivar held at Van Niwas Ashram, Nainital visited Madhuban. The women from the 'Khushali' outreach program also set up a small display of products during the Nainital shivar.



*Aspirants from sourcing our oneness*

- 2) Ms. Rohini Singh from Sage & Gum a women's cooperative in Australia offered collaboration with 'Khushali' Livelihood Program to give training to 'Khushali' women to work for overseas orders.



*Ms. Rohini Singh in conversation with Anju didi*

- 3) Dr. Neil Deuchar ( a psychiatrist from England) had a discussion with 'Khushali' women on their health and well-being.



*Dr Deuchar at a village home and in a discussion with 'Khushali' women*

- 4) Eminent artist Mr. Bratin Khan and Mrs. Khan visited the ashram and appreciated the gardens and meditated at Prabhu Sthal.



*Mr. Bratin Khan and his family in Madhuban*

- 5) Ms. Meenakshi Nayar from an NGO called ETASHA in New Delhi interacted with the women from the 'Khushali' program.



*Ms. Nayar in conversation with 'Khushali' women*

- 6) Visitors gathered for an informal conversation with Dr. Mahender Pal, HOD, Agronomy, GBPUAT. (Centre).



*Visit by Dr. Mahendar Pal*

7) Visitors from Argentina came to the Ashram and saw 'Khushali' products. They also meditated at Prabhu Sthal.



*Visitors viewing 'Khushali' products, meditating and walking through the ashram*

8) Visitors at the Integral Living Event – April 2024

Mr. Atul and Mrs. Arti Kirloskar, industrialists and development specialists attended the 'Khushali' Integral Living event and appreciated the work of Madhuban ashram in training 'Khushali' women and village children.



*Weaving conversations for Madhuban*



*Atul and Arti Kirloskar at the Auro Utsav*

9) Visitors from Switzerland meditated at Prashanti as part of their shivir.



10) Many Visitors from Van Niwas study shivirs come to Madhuban Ashram to meditate at the shrine and bask in the beauty of Madhuban – prashad is offered to all.

## 6. Feedback:

*“What a beautiful and charming place this has grown to be. Delighted to see the confidence and skill of the women and children. Wishing the ashram the very best”.*

**-Neelam Kapoor, Former IAS Officer**

*“To visit Madhuban is to drink from the sweet nectar (Madhu) of a simple, selfless existence. In giving we receive, in loving we thrive. May the mission flourish”.*

**Dr -Ritu Lakhtakia**

*“As trustees of Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center with deep connections to the Ashram and Auroville I can recommend any group looking for a retreat space to put Madhuban on the top of their list. We now think of our extended spiritual family as including, Auroville, Sri Aurobindo Ashram- Delhi Branch and its Himalayan chapter- Madhuban”.*

**-Julian Lines**

*“I would like to do sewa to best of my ability. Would like to donate to the best of my capacity with required products”.*

**-Hema Singh**

*“This place feels like home. I love the atmosphere and Anju is someone who I trust and feel safe”.*

**-Saraswati**

*“Excellent place for spiritual journey. A pilgrimage to all higher life aspirants. If mother graces, I can take study shivirs here”.*

**-Manoj Sharma**

*“Felt very fortunate to stay in Madhuban. A very well maintained ashram, providing a highly suitable spiritual environment”.*

**-Veera Swamy. K**

*“An unforgettable experience. The ambience awakens the seekers, the quietude compels an inner dimension to open”.*

**-Dipak thacker**

*“Overall a great experience with cordial people,, beautiful location and lovely floweres”.*

**-Mitu Patodia**



***“We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noon’s of the future.”***

**- Sri Aurobindo**