

AGPV Celebrates Christmas

Like children all over the world, every year children at our school eagerly look forward to Christmas. Thanks to the generous support by so many people, the children and IDS staff once again celebrated on the eve and again on Christmas. All day on the 24th, they decorated the school premises with colorful lights, flowers and balloons. They even decorated a plant with beautiful stars. Everything looked joyous and festive!



In the evening, Pastor Sanjeet Kumar visited the school as he has been doing for many years now. All children and staff lit the candles and offered prayers to Lord Jesus. Pastor Kumar started with a prayer and spoke to the children about the importance of the day. He recited from Bible and explained the meaning of it to the children. Children sang birthday wishes to Jesus which followed by cutting of birthday cake which was distributed to the children along with other sweets. The pastor made the children happy and smiling with his humorous stories, dancing and singing.

The celebration continued onto the next day. On Christmas, gifts (new clothes, shoes, blankets, etc) were presented to the children. The day was even more colorful. All of the children enjoyed special lunch and dinner on Christmas. Staff made sure the children got to eat nice dishes. After dinner, children enjoyed the evening with both modern and traditional dance and musical performances.



In addition to the children, Shared Blessings made sure that the staff who take care of the children were also recognized for the work they do on behalf of the children. The staff was very thankful for the recognition and the gifts; they wanted to make every Shared Blessings supporter know about their gratitude and wished them all a wonderful Christmas and a great new year ahead.



Christmas Celebration At AGPV School Campus On 24th & 25th December 2025



Children are enjoying the food on Christmas



Ashok Bhatra visits AGPV

Many of you, I am sure, remember Ashok Bhatra. He was one of earliest sponsored children. Ashok was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma soon after he was admitted to the program. Anna Weihman, Ashok's sponsor, along with many supporters of Shared Blessings came out to raise the necessary funds to ensure Ashok got the treatment he needed. It was not an easy journey. Cuttack, where he was treated, is 15 hours away from Dasmantpur. Every few months Ashok had to travel by train and spend a few days going through treatment. It left him weak, tired and vulnerable to infections. Travel was grueling; he was in an unfamiliar place; treatment was agonizing...but through it all, Ashok remained positive, always smiling and determined to get better. He lost a year of education but gained a new chance in life. Fast forward to Christmas 2025. Here is the report from Behera about Ashok now.

Ashok Bhatra had the opportunity to visit the AGPV school on Christmas Day (25-12-2025) to meet all the children and staff of IDS & AGPV school. He shared his success story with guests, staff and mainly, children residing at the school now. He wanted to encourage them to do well and dream for a great future.



Ashok talked about the death of his father when he was a child and the impact it had on his mother and siblings. He shared the difficulties the family faced and the opportunity to be sponsored by Shared Blessings and move to the school. Ashok talked about how the school provided him with all the material, monetary and emotional support – he especially shared the support he got from Shaila Maa and Anna Mother. He spoke of becoming sick with cancer and how he was saved by Anna Mother; he said he will forever be grateful for being saved from cancer.

Ashok went on to finish his high school matriculation, two years of college and on to ITI trade school. He said all of this was made possible through his sponsor, Shared Blessings and IDS. Ashok is now able to stand on his own two feet and provide support to his family. He is the main breadwinner for the family now. He is working as a mechanic at a private company in Hyderabad (in the neighboring state of Telangana) and earns a respectable sum along with many benefits. He is very proud of the support he can provide to his widowed mother and the entire family.

Ashok spoke to the children directly about the opportunity they are getting at the school to become productive members of the society, and encouraged them to make the most of it by growing up to be good human beings. He urged them avail themselves of the golden opportunity given to them to shape their future in a constructive manner.

All who were present were moved by Ashok's story and it was very inspiring for the children to see him overcome all the earlier setbacks and become a successful man.

All in all, it has been a good year for the children at AGPV in Odisha. There are currently forty-six children residing at the school; eighteen of them are boys and twenty-eight are girls. As it has been shared before, the number fluctuates greatly depending on the Child Welfare Department's action to bring children in to be cared for while permanency is figured out. Thirty-three long term residents are sponsored by Shared Blessings but the funds we send takes care of them all. Children are taught at the school through third class; after that, children attend local government school in Dasmantpur. As always, the children who are in eight, ninth and tenth grades get extra tutoring every day during the week. This is made possible through special funds donated by supporters of Shared Blessings.

Support Provided:

- During the period, ration and other needs/Learning Materials were provided to all the children.
- Children have the opportunity to learn working with the computers throughout the week. There are six computers available to them and one teacher has been engaged to work with them three times during the week. A part-time teacher is also engaged for providing art & craft training to the children.
- Initiative has been taken for vocational training. Two sewing machine is provided and girls are practicing sewing.
- Children are using library on regular basis.
- Special coaching is being given to improve the English standard of the children both written and verbal and through color books as well.
- Children are using/practicing various color books to improve their knowledge on various subjects.

Health and Sanitation Practices:

It is reported that all of the children are healthy and practicing good hygienic habits as advised by the doctor. Monthly checkups are organized by AGPV staff. Children receive medicine as needed for any minor medical issues. Anything more serious, they are taken to the hospital in Koraput. Behera reports that children get plenty of exercise and a yoga teacher works with them several times a week as well.

Food Practices:

As reported, all children receive healthy, balanced meals consisting of rice, dal, green vegetables, seasonal vegetables and fruits and milk. Children are provided with three meals a day with snacks provided twice a day.

Participation of AGPV Children in District and State Level Programs:

Most of the AGPV Children, both boys and girls, participated in District level Cultural Programs in Dance/Debate/Drawing/ Football/Running/High jump and Volleyball competition and got prizes.



Chicken Coop:

Behera reports that the construction of the chicken coop is already completed, and order has been given to get the chicks from the hatchery but due to heavy cold, the veterinarian advised that it is not advisable to bring chicks during this heavy unexpected cold as death rate will be high. It is feasible that they will arrive by the end of January, once the environment is suitable for the survival of the chicks. Their arrival is eagerly anticipated as the production of eggs as well as chicken as part of meal plan will not only mean healthy meals for the children but also reduction in expenses in procuring them.

