Annual Report on the work of the

Ali S. K. Memorial Society for the Children

for the year 2025-26

1. Introduction

The financial year 2025–26 was a period of profound strategic adaptation and resilience for the *Ali S. K. Memorial Society for the Children* as it navigated institutional roadblocks to fulfill its core mission. Faced with an unexpected absence of child referrals from statutory authorities for our residential home, we successfully pivoted, establishing a community-based Outreach Program as our new primary core project. This transition expanded vital healthcare, nutritional, civic, and educational support directly to vulnerable families across Kolkata and neighboring rural districts. Despite administrative hurdles this year also witnessed a deeply meaningful event with a landmark anniversary, the 25th Birthday celebration that united alumni, volunteers, and beneficiaries, beautifully reaffirming the enduring spirit of the Ali S. K. family.

2. Activities

(i) General – The *Ali S. K. Memorial Society for the Children* supported 19 needy boys and girls under its Outreach Program at the beginning of the financial year 2025-26 and another nine destitute children were added during the year. This means that we supported 28 children from Kolkata and rural areas of South 24 Parganas District in various ways, such as medical aid and vaccination, psychological support and counselling, food and nutritional assistance, or simply help in obtaining proper documents. We also organised day outings, picnics and excursions for them. Unfortunately towards the end of the financial year a total of five children dropped-out from our Outreach Program, so that 23 boys and girls remained under its umbrella on 31st March'26.

Also in the past financial year the last remaining orphaned boy still under our support got his higher secondary results in May'25 and passed with good results in the science stream. The young adult went on to enrol with our support for B.Sc. (Hons.) in Physics at Amity University in the same month. The children under our Outreach Program too received educational support throughout the year and we sponsored stationary and study material, school uniforms, private tuitions as well as school fees as per the individual needs of each child under this sponsorship program.

Because our children's home in Santoshpur is now a Child Care Institute (CCI) registered under JJ Act, 2015 and is reserved for Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP) referred by the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), we rented a nearby flat from May'25 to separate our growing Outreach Program from the CCI and to be able to render services under the same.

Organized under our Outreach Program the past financial year featured a wide range of activities and events for children again. These initiatives were greatly supported by the enthusiastic volunteerism and participation of our former wards, the alumni of the Ali S. K. family. It all started with our traditional annual gathering honouring **Ali Salem Khalifa** (Ali S. K.), the namesake of our society, on his birth anniversary on the first day of the financial year. Children of our Outreach Program as well as former wards of our home were invited and enjoyed a day of games and fun. This was followed by a visit to the Alipore Zoo in the same month. During the summer holidays we organised an outing to Bakhali Beach with some of the children of our Outreach Program. Further events were organized for them on Independent Day, Gandhi Jayanti and Republic Day, as well as Children's Day, Rakhi and Holi, but the main event of the year was as always the Birthday on 19th November. This year it was already the 25th return of the day the first street children had moved into our home on 19.11.2000 and this, of course, deserved a big celebration. At the end of the next month we went to the Sundarbans with some children of the Outreach program and in January'26 everyone was invited for our annual picnic. The year ended as always with a minute of silence in the courtyard of our home in Santoshpur on 31st March 26, the death anniversary of **Ali Salem Khalifa**, which was attended mainly by the alumni.





The year did not go quite as we had hoped for our children's home. In May'25, a team from CINI visited us for a workshop covering compliance with CWC rules and regulations, the completion and filing of numerous statutory forms and the maintenance of the 26 mandatory registers. They also informed us that all required staff must be hired before any child can be referred to us and so we hired caregivers, security guards, child psychologist and a doctor, all women, to be ready and prepared for any potential referral by the CWC. We also appointed a Supervisor to overlook measures for the compliance with JJ rules and guidelines. A CCTV system had been installed in June'25 and later on some more cameras were added. This gave us some hope that soon some children might be sent by the CWC, but sadly, throughout the year not a single child was referred to us by them. Instead, after a long wait, a further inspection of our home by two ladies of the CWC took place in February'26, but they



came to the conclusion that the infrastructure of our home might not be suitable for their purpose and we are yet to figure out what this means for the future of our children's home. So after a full financial year we are still awaiting the first child to be placed in our CCI.
Already at the beginning of the financial year we had discussions with our German partner organization 'Aktion Lebenshilfe fur Indiens Strassenkinder e. V.' about the problems with our children's home and our new focus on our Outreach Program and they expressed willingness to continue with their financial support. In November'25 Dr. Helgo of H.E.L.G.O. e.V., another German organization that had supported us on and of over the years came with his team for a visit to our home and he too was willing to continue his support, should there be a financial bottleneck. Unfortunately he also announced that this would be his last visit to India, due to age and health related issues. This reassuring of both German partners alleviated a little our concerns, that we might lose financial support, due to the current change of our target group from street children to children of the rural poor.

(ii) Outreach Program – With our children's home temporarily remaining empty, our Outreach Program successfully pivoted to become our primary core project during the last financial year. This strategic shift allowed us to deliver immediate, life-changing intervention directly to destitute children and their families within their own communities.
To create a dedicated space for this vital work, we leased a local apartment to serve as an Outreach Program Centre (OPC) physically separated from our children's home and in an effort to optimize our resources, a staff member originally hired as a caregiver for our children's home was redeployed to the OPC to assist and interact with single mothers and their vulnerable children. An Outreach Program Coordinator had already been hired at the close of the previous financial year and he worked tirelessly in the field, managing a dual mandate: identifying new, deserving cases facing extreme hardship and rigorously monitoring our existing beneficiaries to ensure they received comprehensive, uncompromised support.
Throughout the financial year our Outreach program rolled out a holistic array of essential services designed to address the physical, educational, and civic needs of our beneficiaries:
Healthcare & Preventive Medicine: We systematically reviewed the immunization status of every child in the program, facilitating updates and vaccinations wherever gaps were identified. Comprehensive health check-ups were conducted to monitor development and catch medical issues early.
Nutritional Intervention: To combat the chronic malnutrition prevalent among impoverished youth, we provided robust nutritional support. This included the structured, regular distribution of fresh milk and fruits to toddlers and young children, alongside the provision of seasonal clothing.

Educational Empowerment: Our team meticulously analyzed the unique educational needs of each child, subsequently supplementing their schooling with necessary learning materials, tuition support and academic guidance to prevent school dropouts.
Social & Civic Rehabilitation: Recognizing that a lack of legal identity traps families in systemic poverty, we actively assisted guardians in navigating government bureaucracy. Our team successfully helped families secure critical identity documents, including Birth Certificates and Aadhaar cards, for both the children and themselves—effectively unlocking their access to state welfare schemes.
Holistic Development: To counter the psychological weight of severe poverty, we organized a dynamic calendar of cultural events, recreational activities, and educational excursions throughout the year, fostering a profound sense of joy, inclusion and community solidarity.
By expanding our footprint through the Outreach Program, our NGO ensured that despite institutional roadblocks, our mission to protect and uplift the most vulnerable children remained entirely uninterrupted.

(iii) Medical – As part of our Outreach Program, we checked the vaccination status of children under our program and alerted their guardians about free government vaccination drives. We organized and financed comprehensive health check-ups for them at the paediatric department of the nearby KPC Hospital, with which we had established a valuable partnership, so that they would provide these services for a very nominal fee. We purchased medication for them and instructed their guardians how to give it to their children. This initiative under our Outreach Program ensures that all children remain protected against preventable diseases and that their overall well-being is regularly monitored. To strengthen our healthcare support, we have also appointed Dr. Kohena Roy to provide regular services for any children admitted to our CCI by the CWC. While there are no children in our CCI she assists us with monitoring the health and nutritional status of the children of our Outreach Program. Further to this we have also hire a child psychologist as required for our CCI under JJ Rules. She is supposed to assess and support the mental health status of children admitted to our CCI by the CWC and to provide a safe space for them to express their thoughts, emotions, and challenges, but for now she too only gives counseling sessions to children of our Outreach Program on a need basis.



Fortunately, there were no medical emergencies in the past financial year, however, we assisted one single mother to admit her three year old daughter to a government hospital, when she suffered from very high fever, even though she lacked proper documents of identification for an admission. Furthermore, a broken arm, a painful ear infection, dental and other problems of

children under our Outreach Program could be treated in KPC hospital with our help.

(iv) Meals – Even during a rather quiet year, the main kitchen at our children's home remained a bustling hub of care and preparation. For most of the year, it lovingly sustained our office staff and the dedicated employees required to be on-site daily under JJ guidelines, ready to receive children referred by the CWC. Our food chart sanctioned by the competent authorities was followed, even though no child stayed in the home. Beyond daily operations the meals for events and day-outings for the children under our Outreach Program were prepared here as well and on special occasions—most notably our cherished 'Birthday' celebration—the baking kitchen was brought back to life to whip up celebratory cakes. Meanwhile, the kitchen of the OPC played a quieter but equally vital role, dedicated solely to nourishing the children of our Outreach Program with wholesome milk, fresh fruit, and tailored nutritional support.



(v) Education – At the start of the financial year, the final ward from our former boys' home received his higher secondary results in the science stream. Expressing a keen interest in pursuing a BSc (Hons) in Physics at Amity University, he successfully enrolled by the end of May'25 with our financial assistance. Additionally, we began the year supporting 19 boys and girls of our Outreach program, adding 9 more children over the following months to reach a total of 28 beneficiaries. The educational aid provided to these children was tailored to their individual needs and encompassed one or more of the following: study materials, stationery, school uniforms and shoes, school bags, school tiffin, private tuition, monthly and/or annual school fees. In cases involving challenging family environments, we also funded boarding school admissions.
Regrettably, support could not be sustained for all 28 children by the end of the financial year. Five students dropped out of school and could not be motivated to return. Furthermore, the young adult enrolled in the Physics Honours program at Amity University withdrew after his first semester, pausing his studies in December 2025. He subsequently joined the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in New Delhi for vocational training at the end of March 2026.

(vi) Excursions – Providing a family-like environment within our NGO's residential children's home had always allowed us to easily foster a sense of belonging, togetherness, team spirit and family bonding among our children. Replicating all this for the beneficiaries of our Outreach

Program, however, proved significantly more challenging. The children under this scheme are scattered across Kolkata and the entire district of South 24 Parganas, meaning they do not initially know one another. To bridge this gap, structured excursions and day-outings have become an essential tool. Bringing these scattered children together creates a powerful sense of shared identity and a unified support network within our NGO's Outreach Program.

But beyond offering vital opportunities for social connection, these group activities can also provide destitute children with life-changing benefits. Excursions and day-outings offer critical psychological, social and educational advantages that directly counter the chronic stress of poverty and neglect. For children facing severe hardship, these outings are not just entertainment; they are essential interventions that foster cognitive development and emotional resilience. Shared adventures strengthen friendships and teach teamwork, while interacting with mentors, caregivers and the public helps children build healthy trust in society. Moreover, these outings grant vulnerable children access to public spaces they are normally excluded from, fostering a true sense of inclusion.

Keeping all this in mind, we began the year in April'25 with a dynamic day visit for the youngest children of our Outreach Program to the Alipore Zoo, where they enjoyed observing animals and learning about wildlife in a safe and engaging environment. Our second excursion took us to



Bakkhali, a seaside destination, during the summer holidays in June'25. Proper protection and supervision were ensured throughout, with staff members divided into groups to look after the children and provide guidance. The same precautions were taken at the end of December'25 during a trip with our Outreach children to one of the islands of the Sunderbans, where they met other program beneficiaries who live across various local villages. All of this was rounded up beautifully in January'26 with our traditional Annual Picnic in the countryside, where both current and former beneficiaries of our NGO were invited to enjoy together.

(vii) Birthday – On 19th November 2000 the first ten homeless street children found a home in our project. Since they came from the streets without birth certificates and we therefore did not know exactly when they were born, we decided to declare this memorable day for them and us as the collective birthday of all our children, which from then on was to be celebrated fittingly every year. This year marked the 25th anniversary of this special day—an occasion that actually deserved a particularly grand celebration! Unfortunately, however, the project stood empty, as no children had yet been assigned to us by the responsible authorities. Since we had no children in the house with whom we could have prepared the

traditionally entertainment program, we decided to skip the large stage that is usually set up for this occasion and forgo inviting many external guests. But on the occasion of the 25th anniversary, we wanted to at least spend a beautiful day with our former boys and the children from the Outreach Program.

Even before the event, our boys arrived one by one for this big day from Delhi, Mumbai, Lucknow, Rewari, south of Delhi, and from around Kolkata. Some, who had already started their own families, came to the event with their wives and children. Also present were eleven of the twelve girls who still lived in the house last year and were able to experience our children's birthday for the first time back then, as well as several other children from our Outreach Program.

We didn't want to celebrate completely without guests after all, so we invited the alumni from the PBKOJP Boys' Home project, with whom we have been friends for many years. In addition, a few selected guests from Dr. Helgo's project in Howrah were invited.

As every year, we decorated and adorned the house the evening before. Most of our former wards were there to help us and since we didn't have to set up a stage, we were more or less finished with the preparations by midnight.

On the birthday itself, our former wards met in the morning for their traditional football tournament on the football field, while the children from the Outreach Program spent the day with games and activities inside the house. After the football tournament the boys came for a shared lunch and then joined in the games in the afternoon. Later in the afternoon the first guests slowly started trickling in and cheered on the participants.

In the evening we had the annual quiz competition, which was prepared by the alumni and then the time had come: everyone gathered around the two birthday cakes and sang "Happy Birthday"! The first cake was cut by one of the little ones from the Outreach Program. This time, to mark the anniversary, we had baked a particularly large birthday cake while one former ward had funded a cake from the pastry shop decorated with a photo of some of the girls who had spent a year in our children’s home before they had to be sent back to their homeless guardians who stay on the platforms of Sealdah Station. After refreshing ourselves with tea, coffee, and cake, there was an award ceremony for all the winners of the day's various competitions. Boys and girls, staff and guests, young and old, were delighted with great prizes! Then this wonderful day reached its crowning conclusion with an excellent dinner prepared by our fantastic cook and her team.



(viii) Volunteers – Volunteers play an indispensable role in enriching our Ali S. K. family and we are incredibly proud of our former wards, who, having grown up in our children's home, regularly return to give back to the organization that supported them. In addition, local college students generously volunteer their time at our Outreach Program Centre. While our former beneficiaries mainly gave support during events and outings or organized sports and games, the young students organized lively drawing, singing and dancing activities in our OPC when parents were present with their children. This provided the children with a bright, joyful space to express themselves.



(ix) Sports, Arts, Music & Dance – Our children's home, which was once also a proud sports academy, was empty last year and so our hopes to revive it and even launch a new girls' football team were shattered. At present, we are unable to conduct regular sports activities, as all the children of our Outreach Program are scattered over an entire district, but throughout the year our former wards who hold coaching licenses were trying to organise training sessions, when ever some children of the Outreach Program were around. The aim of these activities was for children under our Outreach Program, who stayed in different places, to get to know each other and to motivate them to actively participate in sports and games, helping them build confidence, discipline and a spirit of teamwork. Similarly the time was never too short for our volunteers and dedicated staff to organize some drawing, music, singing and dancing sessions when children turned up with their guardians at our OPC. Although modest in scale, these activities created a joyful environment and inspired the children to pursue their interests with enthusiasm.

(x) Problems faced by us – Our main hurdle in the past financial year stemmed from unsuccessful engagements with statutory authorities concerning our children's home infrastructure. To meet operational readiness requirements, we first had to hire and then maintain a full team of staff on our payroll, including caregivers, security personnel, a child psychologist, social workers and a medical doctor. However, due to a complete absence of child referrals from the CWC, our NGO sustained exceptionally high operational costs to keep this team on the payroll, without having the opportunity to provide shelter or care to a single homeless child.

Another most critical and challenging obstacle for us, when assisting

destitute children and their families, was obtaining proper documentation for them. Without valid identity papers, birth certificates, or legal residency documents, children are systematically locked out of vital state benefits, healthcare and formal education. Guardians in extreme poverty often lack the resources, literacy, or stability to navigate complex bureaucratic legal systems. This administrative barrier turns a lack of paperwork into a cycle of exclusion, making it nearly impossible for humanitarian aid to create lasting stability for a child and unfortunately, with increasingly stringent laws, securing necessary documents becomes an almost impossible task for us. Even our adult former wards - ex-street children without any known relatives - needed our assistance to manage the complexities of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), although they could produce all the required documents right up to their passports.

In another development, shocking news that deeply affected our entire NGO reached us in August'25, when our long-serving auditor of 17 years suffered a severe stroke on the exact day he was meant to sign and deliver our annual audit report. Sadly, he passed away two months later without being able to complete the job. We were deeply saddened by this tragic loss, which also left our organization in a difficult position as we hurried to find a replacement auditor and manage critical statutory deadlines.

Finally, just as the financial year was drawing to a close, the outbreak of war in the Middle East disrupted global energy supplies and caused a severe local shortage of cooking gas, threatening our meal preparations. Fortunately, we were able to transition to electric cooking just in time to sustain our daily operations.

3. Finances

Our financial inflection point actually occurred two years ago, when annual expenditure spiked again after several years of decline due to a renewed increase in the number of children we support. This upward trend continued into the last financial year, with annual expenses rising by another 13%. However, this recent increase stems not only from expanding our Outreach Program to assist destitute children outside our residential facility, but also from the fact that staff had to be provided in our CCI throughout the year to be ready and prepared for any potential referral by the CWC.

We held detailed discussions with our German partner, 'Aktion Lebenshilfe fur Indiens Strassenkinder e. V.', regarding the operational challenges of running a children's home under the JJ Act and our strategic shift toward community-based outreach. Fortunately, they agreed to maintain their longstanding financial commitment, fully funding our budget for the past financial year. This support was critical, as our local fundraising fell short. While annual membership fees doubled, individual local donations dropped to a negligible amount. Moving forward, we must aggressively diversify our local income streams to reduce our heavy reliance on foreign aid.

4. Outlook

Looking ahead to the upcoming financial year, the *Ali S. K. Memorial Society for the Children* is committed to stabilizing its institutional operations while aggressively expanding its community footprint. A primary operational focus will be resolving the infrastructure and referral ambiguities surrounding our Child Care Institute with the authorities to ensure the residential facility can finally open its doors to children in need of care and protection. Concurrently, our NGO will try to build upon the massive momentum of our Outreach Program, optimizing and deepening its holistic healthcare, nutritional, civic and educational interventions for vulnerable families.