

Asha Chennai: Minutes of the Meeting held on Sunday 5th July 2026

Following were present:

Bhaskar, Kalyan, Kasturi, Komalavalli, Madhavan, Paripoornam, Rajaraman, Shiva, Sundaram, Venkat,

1. Ratification of the minutes of the meeting held on 31st May 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st May, 2026 were ratified unanimously

2. Staff Loans and Changes

The proposal to grant a loan of Rs 60,000 each to two teachers of Sangamam Project were duly approved. Conditions apply.

3. Staff Policy Updates

- Tuition/Political participation

The extant Staff Policy Guidelines along with Paripoornam's suggestions were discussed in detail. It was decided to include inter alia prohibition of teachers engaging in private tutoring and participation of all staff members in political activities in the policy guidelines. It was also decided to include highlights of POCSO act to sensitise the staff members. An undertaking to the effect that the staff are aware of the guidelines including salient features of the POCSO act would be obtained from each teacher and staff member on joining and also annually and kept filed in the respective project offices. Staff Policy Guidelines (July 2026) would be redrafted by Paripoornam and Sundaram and a poll put up for voting.

-Total Loan outstanding - 5% to 8%

Considering the increase in staff strength and request for loans it was decided to increase the ceiling limit of total loans from 5% to 8% of annual expenditure.

4. Updated Asha Chennai Financials

Rajaraman presented Asha Chennai Financial figures explaining in detail how our capital adequacy stands as on 31 December 2025 with a working capital ratio of 1.685 based on allocation of 80% of budget requirements the fund position appeared in a good position.

5. Updated Project Planning for 26-27

- Salaries

Rajaraman presented the details and explained the rationale behind fixing salaries specific to posts, designations and persons which were agreed to.

- No of Schools and Teachers

Rajaraman presented the details of coverage of schools under various programs like Sprint, Explore, those which come under Karadipath etc. which form the basis for budget projection.

- Extra work, Exempt

Rajaraman explained the need for compensating those teachers who spend extra time other than school hours to carry out work entrusted to them like content work, preparation for ppt presentations etc. by their Leads. It was decided to remunerate these efforts by granting Rs 80 Per hour as certified by the Leads. This compensation will be increased to Rs 90 per hour for new work done after June 2026. Such teachers who are in leadership positions will not be included in this.

Kumari and Nathiya, our two staff members, have transcended the hierarchy. They work for programs and they formulate, guide and oversee field teachers to execute various programs. They are at the beck and call of the Volunteers who initiate and drive these programs. It was decided to designate them as Exempt Leads.

6. Budget Review after clarity re Amazon Split and

Karadipath Extension Budget proposals of the following project were presented and approved

SI No	Project	Utilisation 25-26	Budget for 26-27
1	Cauvery	14,11,316	1,630,500
2	Thulasi	3,522,339	5,130,900
3	Pearl	4,782,650	6,137,500
4	Sangamam	10,773,137	19,803,000
5	Asha Kanini	2,697,387	4,650,000
6	Admin	1,503,741	2,430,000

All proposals as discussed and finalised during the last few meetings including this meeting for eventual uploading to the server would be shared by Rajaraman and confirmation obtained from project stewards.

7. Project Allocation for 26-27

Despite the comfortable financial projections, Rajaraman reiterated the necessity to restrict expenditure allocation to 80 percent of the approved project expenditure. The following terms were unanimously agreed:

80% of the project budget towards existing scope (schools) of the project will be allocated from the buffer. To spend beyond this 80% or for new scope/schools, the project stewards will need to raise funds. 50% of the funds raised by the stewards may be used for these excess expenses.

8. Potential New Project in Schools in Sulur CBE

Through KaradiPath, Asha has been brought into this project. ZF WindPower (India) is keen on running a program with KaradiPath as well as our own digital literacy program. They have sent an MOU to Asha Chennai to begin operations in Schools around Sulur near Coimbatore. Nithya, a CS trainer from Sangamam is in Coimbatore and we hope to engage her. Ramya Manoj a resident of Coimbatore has kindly agreed to steward this project

10. Ongoing/Upcoming Things

- Hiring

Rajaraman stated that Asha Chennai would be hiring about 10 to 15 teachers presently to meet the needs created by attrition as well as new schools to be taken up.

- FCRA/Audit

FCRA application for Asha South India trust was nearly ready. Audit of Asha India for 25-26 had been completed and Asha South India Trust was underway

- Asha Chennai Annual Report 2025-26

This is being worked on by Priyanka and Rajaram. He invited other volunteers to also step up to help with this.

- TIS Training

This was scheduled to take place in Bangalore in September/October'26. Two of the three sessions that we have are planned for Sept/Oct. One of them will be the usual one we have been having the last 3 times. However the other one is intended for senior students and teachers. This will bring up topics relevant for our own Robotics 2.0 curriculum. Gomathy and Pushpa are driving this discussion with TIS.

- ICSEC Conference in Korea

Rajaraman informed that Asha Chennai had been invited to participate in this conference to be held from October 14-16 in Seoul Korea, the theme being "AI for ALL" Travel and Accommodation to be borne by the participants. However ICSEC offered to sponsor one delegate from Asha Chennai. Participation otherwise would entail an expenditure on Air travel and accommodation for four days. A supplementary budget proposal would be put up in due course after finalising the list of delegates from among us.

- Robotics Curriculum 2.0 Discussions

Work is continuing to progress on this front.

- IITB Papers

Rajaraman informed the team that the paper written by Gomathy and him along with Dr Ramkumar Prof IITB and his students on "Parental Education and the Performance of Children" had been submitted. We will know shortly whether it is accepted, chosen for presentation on the stage etc. The presentations will take place at IIT Jodhpur during the International Conference on Technology 4 Education to be held in December '26.

11. Review of Recent Events

- Right Start 2026

Rajaraman recalled that this refresher training of Asha Teachers was different from the previous years. The sessions this time dealt with broader topics of teaching theory like open ended questions, questioning as a pedagogical tool, multi-disciplinary approaches to teaching etc. Teachers were introduced to open ended questions during the Maths session through questions that have Always True, Sometimes True, Always False for answers. There was also an interesting session on developing Questioning Mind by Hema Ramanathan. Purva's session on Science also involved the language Arts and programming!

- Teacher Evaluation Test

The Test was held on 13 June 2026. Computer Teachers were given the test in two parts;- one with paper and pen on CS Theory and another to be completed on a Laptop online. Regular and Both the CS paper and the usual Maths-English paper had a section with questions on Teaching Theory this year..

- RTC Vennikonenthal

The above RTC was inaugurated on 19 June 2026 in the presence of our volunteers Rajaraman, Bhaskar and Shiva and Jyotsna a well wisher of Asha Chennai

- Asha Impressions at Pearl

Asha impressions were held on 20 June 2026 with enthusiastic participation by school children in our Pearl project at Toothukudi.

- TICF Counselling

Two sessions on Career Counselling under the aegis of Technocrats India College Finder had been planned to be held for Scholarship and RTC Students one each at Mylapore and Thiruvallur. The first one at Chennai took place in Mylapore. However since the feed back was not positive it was decided not to proceed further,

- AFE Elections and Project Utilisation

Rajaraman announced the results of AFE Election and incidentally mentioned that the out going team was mostly from Austin Texas while the new team was from Silicon Valley. Asha Chennai welcomed the new team and wished them success in carrying forward the good work. Rajaraman also explained how reporting of fund utilisation project wise was now required to be maintained and reported

12. Interaction with Govt

- ADW Status of Rs 30 L Proposal

Nothing had been since heard after Asha being selected

- SPARK

No fresh development to report

- NSNOP Permissions

Officers of NSNOP seemed to be favourably disposed to Asha Chennai's outreach in TN education scene. Asha Chennai was in continuous touch with NSNOP officials.

13. Other than Scheduled Agenda items

- Arun Patel

This US Citizen had been interested in Tamilnadu for long although he was not born or brought up here. Having heard of our work in the field of education he has promised to visit our schools shortly

-Dr Prakash Kashwan

He is a professor of environmental studies at Brandeis University in the US. He is a climatologist. He is working on a proposal to study the impact of climate change on education. Rajaram is also associated with this effort.