

HEALTH AWARENESS AND HEALTHY COOKING COMPETITION

Date: 16th August 2026

Venue: Bibah Bhawan, Borengajuli Tea Estate

Programme: SHELTER Programme

As part of the SHELTER Programme, a Health Awareness and Healthy Cooking Competition was organised on 16th August 2026 at the newly constructed Bibah Bhawan of Borengajuli Tea Estate, Dimakuchi, Udalguri. The programme brought together women from the five SHELTER centres in the Dimakuchi area. The participants were mothers of children who are enrolled in the SHELTER Tuition Centres.

The health awareness session was facilitated by Mr. Pramod Deka, Pharmacist, and Mrs. Jusna Hasa, Nurse, from Dimakuchi Hospital and Sr. Caroline Hembrom, former District Coordinator. The resource persons conducted an informative and interactive session on balanced diets, healthy eating habits, nutrition and hygienic food preparation practices. Special attention was given to the nutritional needs of children, pregnant women and lactating mothers, highlighting the importance of adequate and balanced nutrition during these stages of life. The participants were made aware of the importance of including foods rich in protein, iron, vitamins and fibre in their daily meals. They were also encouraged to make greater use of affordable, locally available and seasonal food items, including vegetables, pulses, leafy greens and other traditional foods, to prepare healthy and nutritious meals for their families. The session also focused on hygiene while preparing and handling food, including washing hands before cooking and eating, properly washing vegetables and other ingredients, keeping cooking utensils and the kitchen area clean, and storing leftover food safely. The resource persons emphasised that good nutrition and proper food hygiene go hand in hand in preventing illness and ensuring the health and well-being of the family. The women were also encouraged to adopt these simple and practical practices in their daily lives, particularly when preparing food for children. Sr. Caroline also encouraged and motivated the participating women through her words of appreciation and guidance.

An interactive nutrition quiz was also conducted during the programme, presided over by Ms. Helena Bhengra. The women were asked simple questions related to healthy eating, child nutrition, vegetables, hydration, food hygiene and the importance of avoiding excessive junk food and sugar. The quiz created an enjoyable and engaging learning environment, allowing the participants to demonstrate their understanding of the topics discussed during the health awareness session. Participants who answered correctly were awarded prizes on the spot. Surprisingly and interestingly, the women answered the questions correctly with great confidence, demonstrating their interest in and understanding of healthy nutrition and family health.

Following the awareness session and quiz, the Cooking Competition was organised among the participating women. Six teams took part in the competition and prepared a variety of nutritious dishes using locally available ingredients. The dishes included:

- Dal and Munga Saag (Drumstick Leaves)

- Pui Saag (Malabar Spinach)
- Aloo (Potato) and Kochu Saag (Taro Leaves)
- Begena Pitika (Mashed Eggplant)
- Dal and Munga Saag (Drumstick Leaves)
- Dhekiya Saag (Fiddlehead Fern)
- Kol Phul (Banana Blossom) with Omita (Raw Papaya)
- Moong Dal
- Dhekiya Saag bhaji (Fiddlehead Fern)
- Kas Kol (Raw Banana) / Saak (Leafy Greens)
- Paneer Bailahi and Aloo
- (Paneer with Tomato and Potato Curry)
- Kolphul Fry (Banana Blossom fry)

The competition provided an opportunity for the women to demonstrate their creativity, teamwork and knowledge of healthy cooking practices. The use of traditional and locally available ingredients also demonstrated that nutritious meals can be prepared in an affordable, practical and culturally appropriate manner.

The dishes were evaluated based on their nutritional value, preparation, presentation, creativity and overall quality. The teams performed enthusiastically, making the competition both educational and engaging.

COMPETITION RESULTS

1st Prize – Team 4 (26 points)

1. Bolo Tirkey
2. Anu Patel
3. Monta Munda
4. Sarita Kujur
5. Rupali Munda

2nd Prize – Team 3 (22 points)

1. Punia Lakra
2. Punam Orang
3. Monika Xalxo
4. Josliya Minj
5. Suman Ekka

3rd Prize – Team 1 (21 points)

1. Juli Kerketta
2. Junita Xalxo
3. Teresa Hassa
4. Junita Soy
5. Asha Baxla

Other Participating Teams**Team 2 – 19 points**

1. Geeta Ekka
2. Lily Tirkey
3. Sima Lugun
4. Asha Khalkho
5. Anjela Kujur

Team 5 – 16 points

1. Lokhi Munda
2. Sobita Tanti
3. Jasmin Munda
4. Fullmait Munda
5. Julika Khalkho

Team 6 – 13 points

1. Nitisha Sabar
2. Rita Parja
3. Rina Sabar
4. Bhasoti Sabar
5. Rita Parja

The winning teams were recognised for their efforts and received useful household prizes. The 1st Prize was awarded to Team 4, which received a 4-litre Hawkins pressure cooker. Team 3, securing the 2nd Prize, received a steel container set, while Team 1, which stood third, received a Milton casserole. In addition to the three winning teams, consolation prizes were distributed to all the other participating teams in appreciation of their enthusiasm, teamwork and active participation in the competition.

The programme successfully combined health awareness with practical learning, enabling mothers to gain a better understanding of nutrition and healthy food preparation. The cooking competition further encouraged the participants to explore nutritious recipes using locally available ingredients and strengthened their confidence in making healthier food choices for their families.

Following the programme, a brief staff review and reflection meeting was conducted to assess the overall implementation of the activity. The staff discussed the outcomes of the programme, level of participation, coordination, strengths and areas that could be improved. The team also reflected on the challenges and mistakes encountered during the programme and discussed



possible ways to address them in future activities. The review provided an opportunity for the staff to share their observations and learnings, with the aim of improving the planning, coordination and implementation of future SHELTER activities.



