



Registered Charity No. 1125102

www.supportingdalitchildren.com

Easter 2018 Newsletter

Dear Friends,

This year, Peter and I didn't return to Manvi and Pannur in January, so this Newsletter is full of other people's news as well as some other news from us. I begin with a first-hand account of the recent Republic Day celebrations in Manvi. Rosemary Illingworth, one of our sponsor parents who has been to Manvi twice now, decided to go back in January and spend some time with the young teachers at Kapepaladi school. Having been a teacher for many decades, she offered to spend some time with them individually and pass on some of her tips and advice. She is still a private tutor and I have to say one of the best teachers I have ever met! Rosemary has written a wonderful account about India's Republic Day which took place whilst she was there.

"At about 8.20 on the 25th January there was a knock at my door and two people, one I think was the UKG teacher, asked me if I was going to Pannur for Republic Day or staying in Manvi. I told them I was staying in Manvi. "Oh good", they said. "Would you like to come to our celebration of the Republic Day in Manvi tomorrow? I thanked them and agreed.



"I was up early on 26th January, Mass at 6.30, breakfast and across to the Parade Ground by 7.55 am. Luckily I had taken one set of clothes, for want of better words "Sunday best." These I had on. I then learned that Brother Anush and I were to accompany Father Maxim and a lady whose surname ended in Kumar, as the Guard of Honour." (Rosemary can be seen on the left of this photo, together with one of the teachers, Father Maxim, and a garlanded photo of Dr Ambedkar who was a great social reformer and father of the Indian Constitution).

"The children dressed in their team colours, formed groups according to their colour, and stood behind an appropriate flag bearer. Other children representing part of the pageantry of India were dressed according to the role they would play. Some were Freedom Fighters, complete with headbands, others were soldiers in Khaki with a red plume in their berets and a belt in the colours of the Indian flag culminating in a flash."

"There were boys dressed in white with Pandit Nehru style hats. I am unsure of their particular role in the pageant. All children took part except the tiny ones. At the start of proceedings a young man with sword held high escorted us to review everyone. This completed we came back to the viewing platform, as the students began their march past, saluting as they went by. We responded with a salute."

"Some boys appeared with a box in which there were doves and pigeons. I was given one – I'm not too keen on the feel of feathers, but accepted the bird. I spent the next few minutes terrified that the bird would escape prematurely, but all was well. The Indian flag was raised and the birds were released."



“After this we watched some programmes. There was beautiful dancing and singing by some girls. The “Freedom Fighters” were very spectacular – making a human pyramid. The top boy waved the Indian flag. He must have been 3-5 metres off the ground. The boys were very skilled, they also executed another shape with perfection. We were kept in time by the drum band. The programme finished at 9.15 a.m. approximately. The students were then taken by bus to Manvi to join in the town celebrations with other schools. During this time the children were judged on their performance. We got a second and first prize. Well done

the students of Manvi, you did us proud!” Rosemary

Christmas Clothing Appeal and Support from Indigo Island

Our Christmas Clothing Appeal for Christmas last year was really well supported and we were able to buy every pupil at Kapepaladi School, all 310 of them, a new outfit for Christmas. Thank you once again to all who donated to this Appeal. Here are some photos of the children with their new outfits!



One of our supporters forwarded the Clothing Appeal details to her sisters who happen to own a beautiful men’s clothing company, called Indigo Island. After reading about Kapepaladi school and how poor the students are, Terty and Lulu wanted to help and very kindly offered to give a donation for every shirt they sold in person, or through their website in December. The men’s shirts they manufacture and sell are cotton hand block printed shirts, and I would really recommend looking them up if you are wanting to buy a men’s shirt made to the highest standard with beautiful modern designs.

Here is what Terty and Lulu said when I thanked them for their considerable donation and sent them a few photos,

“It’s an absolute pleasure to support the kids, and it’s lovely to see them so delighted with their

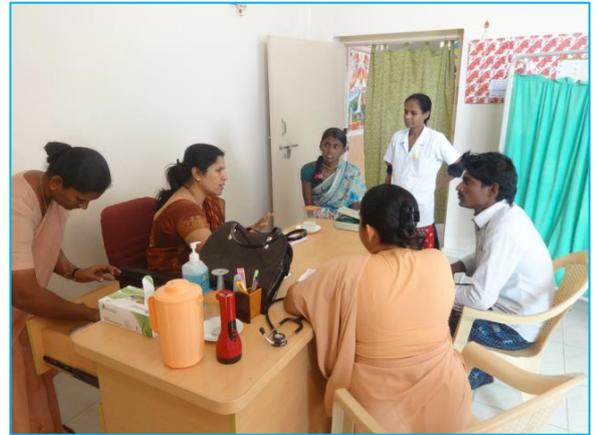
new outfits. We’re sending out a newsletter tomorrow and are including one of the photos; if we can repeat the offer in future it might encourage others to buy too, while supporting such a great cause.”

Their website is www.indigoisland.co.uk and we are extremely grateful for their support!



News from the Pannur Health Centre

The Pannur Health Centre Sisters conducted a free Gynecology and Infertility camp on 17th December. Dr Rajeshwai Nesargi, a gynecologist and specialist in infertility treatment, was invited to conduct this camp. Many couples came for treatment as well as women with other gynecological problems.



Women from self-help groups were given health education in Sagar Camp and Manvi, about prevention and early detection of cancer in women, as well as information about personal hygiene. The Sisters were able to reassure and advise the women who felt very comfortable to ask the Sisters their questions.



The Sisters had a wonderful Christmas celebration with their hospital staff and helpers on 22nd of December. Sister Philomena, Superior of the Convent, as well as Head Mistress at Kapepaladi school, conducted prayers.



[A story from Sister Leena about one of her patients, Mr. Ambrappa](#)

Here is a story from sister Leena, one of the nurses at the Health Centre. To me this story highlights the importance of education as far as health care is concerned. The seminars the Sisters hold and their visits to the villages are invaluable and often lifesaving, but this story illustrates how many men and women still leave their wounds or pains until it is too late, not wanting to miss a day's work or pay the little fees for medication that the Sisters have to charge. It is so sad as there are so many needless deaths from diseases and infested wounds. You can imagine how many deaths there are from Sepsis alone. Sister Leena says that Mr Ambrappa's situation is very indicative of rural Indian life for peasants such as him.

“Mr. Ambrappa is a 70-year old male residing just in front our health centre. He lives a simple peasant life, surrounding by his children and grandchildren. He began coughing one day and came to us for treatment. He responded well to our medications. Some days later his symptoms worsened so we advised him to visit a T.B centre as we could see that his illness was not simple one and he needed more specialist care. The centre diagnosed him to have T.B and started him on anti-tuberculosis treatment that requires a long-term treatment - 8 months.

Due to lack of proper counselling and motivation Mr Ambrappa began to discontinue his treatment and would stop taking the medications when he felt better. When we learnt about this, in spite of all our efforts to convince him, he remained firm with his own belief system. This mindset is typical of an Indian villager. Once he desperately ran to our hospital because he was breathless and couldn't bear his pain anymore. He wanted quick relief. We used this opportunity to tell him to go to a higher centre with better diagnostic facilities and treatment plans. Mr Ambrappa went there reluctantly, but forced to do so because of his helpless situation. He was faced with a big shock. He was diagnosed with Stage IV carcinoma of the lung. His family was shattered by this thunderbolt that stuck them and it has had a huge impact on their ordinary peasant life. The expenses to be met, the financial burden and psychological trauma, all these now have to be borne due to a lack of care and ignorance.”

[New Data Protection Laws](#)

You may have heard from other charities on the subject of regulations concerning Data Protection and how charities store their supporters' data. Supporting Dalit children also has to be compliant, and on May 18th this year, new privacy regulations come into effect which means we need your permission to continue writing to you in the form of Newsletters, Charity Appeals, or forthcoming events etc. I'm afraid that I will need to hear from each of you as to whether you would like to continue to hear from us, so I have attached a form to this Newsletter to complete. The form gives you choices as to how you would prefer that we communicate with you i.e. post, email or phone call, and whichever you prefer you will need to fill in the details and return the form to us. PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO COMPLETE THIS FORM - EITHER SCAN IT AND EMAIL IT, OR POST IT BACK TO ME, OTHERWISE I CAN'T CONTINUE TO SEND YOU OUR LATEST NEWS.

We would like to wish you a very Happy Easter and thank you once again for all your continued support and love for the Dalit children and their families.

Dinah and Peter

p.s. Here is a photo taken with two tailoring students who have completed their training, and their children. We visited their village on the last day of our trip to Manvi in November. More news about this extraordinary visit to follow in our next Newsletter.

p.p.s The Data Protection form is attached, please don't forget to fill it in and return it to me asap. Many thanks!

