

FRIENDS OF SHAMAYITA MATH

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www.friendsofshamayitamath.dk.



December 2021

Dear friends and members of Friends of Shamayita Math

As most of you are aware, Shamayita Math is a non governmental organization, established 25 years ago - on Indian Independence Day - with the purpose of creating a convent school for girls in an area where education for girls were difficult to obtain. This has grown to include many activities: hospital, mobile health clinic, 3 rural villageschools (Marang Buru schools or MB), a school for children with autism, training to improve agriculture and nourishment, craftsmanship, children help line and much more. All in order to help local people. As stated in Shamayita Math' vision: *"Our vision is to serve the marginalized, irrespective of caste, creed and religion, by enhancing the capability leading to sustainable development of rural and urban areas of India"*. You can get more information on www.shamayita-math.org



Sportsday December 2021

Also 2021 was overshadowed by covid-19. The new Omicron variant seems not (yet?) to have spread to West Bengal where there right now are few covid victims. However, there are still restrictions in place. E. g. outdoor activities are not permitted between 23 and 05 o'clock. At November 16th schools could open for the senior classes IX-XII after having been shot down for 20 months. Education has been on-line, but not all students live in areas with internet connection and not all families can afford a device. The pandemic has squeezed their income. In the Convent school more students get subsidy in school fees.

From the beginning of 2021, when the covid curve in India became low, it was possible to call the students back to the MB schools where they - in accordance with the mandate from the government - were taught in groups outdoors in the school campus without opening the classrooms. From October normal school have resumed along with the midday meal. The effort from

the teachers and the villagers have made MB schools more popular and there has been a rise in enrollment. The year end examinations have been held.



Students showing their test results.

MB schools have normally had classes from I - IV and class V and above would be in a government high school. These are still closed, so Shamayita Math has decided to open class V so the students can stay in the same school for one more year. Two new classrooms for these classes have already been build and in the Darangpara school the dining shed, donated by Christianshavn-Slotsholmen Rotary Club will be used. There is another addition after resuming normal classes and that is a kitchen garden for the schools. Teachers have shown good involvement and participation in de gardening activity and soon the students of each of the three MB schools will have nutrition from fresh vegetables from their own school.

As a new initiative a dental check up camp have been held at the MB schools after reopening in October. An awareness was raised on oral hygiene by a dentist, working passionately for dental health of kids. Each of the students got a toothbrush and toothpaste. They also got new school uniforms before the Durgapuja.



Dental check-up and new toothbrushes

Friends of Shamayita Math have focused our efforts to help the MB school in the village of Darangpara, so we know the people we support. When the school was open in October, Bente Hagelund arranged an on-line meeting with teachers and some students at the school. The children found it very fun and interesting to have visual contact all the way to Copenhagen and the teachers could translate from English to Bengali or the local tribal language. Several of our members including Bente and myself have visited the school. It stays in my memory as a very good experience.



New clothes distributed on the Durga Puja festival

As mentioned in a previous newsletter, the Indian Government established new rules for support to Indian NGO's. In accordance with these rules, we transferred money last year, but they were returned by the State Bank of India. However, all formalities are now implemented, so we have transferred 42.000 DKR to Shamayita Math for 2020 and 2021 and the money have been received on their account. This includes sponsorship money to children at the Darangpara school. Our members now support 12 sponsorships. One person has signed up for 5. If you would like to become a sponsor, you can contact Bente Hagelund on bentehagelund@hotmail.com. The price is 700 DKR per year. At the end of this year we have 48 members.

Our homepage www.friendsofshamayitamath.dk has been updated and modernized, so have a look.

On 29. May, we had a very nice summer event in Bente's garden with Indian dances, songs and street food. It is my hope that it will again be possible to have an event next year.

If you here in the holiday season should feel inclined to donate to Shamayita Math, it would be very welcome. You can use mobile pay number: box97814 or bank transfer; reg. nr. 5324 account no.0251179.

I wish all of you a prosperous new year.

Lars Fynbo
Formand

