



# *Novi Survat Charitable Organisation*

(New Beginnings – for the destitute of Goa)

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## **Newsletter 053 December 2016.**

Roger & I have just returned from India where the situation can only be described as chaotic. In an attempt to rid the country of 'black' money and counterfeit notes the Prime Minister on 8<sup>th</sup> November declared (at 4 hours' notice) that all Rs 500 & Rs 1000 notes would cease to be legal tender as from midnight. He declared that anyone with current banknotes could deposit them in a bank account (which most people do not have) or change up to Rs 2000 for new notes. This would not have caused too much trouble except that the banks and ATM's had not received any of the new notes! 48 hrs later the banks started to receive a small quantity of the Rs 2000 notes but no Rs 500 notes. Queues built up outside banks, some over a kilometre long, with people standing in the sun for up to 5 hrs each day only to find the banks had run out of new notes. If you were one of the lucky ones to get your hands on a new Rs 2000 note it was of little use. Bearing in mind a loaf of bread, a pint of milk, & other basic commodities cost less than Rs 50 the new Rs 2000 notes could not be used as the shopkeepers did not have lower denomination notes to give as change. It transpired that the new Rs 500 notes had not yet been printed nor had the ATM's been recalibrated to take the new notes.

The result was (and still is today) that employers are unable to pay wages, the man in the street is unable to buy food, hospitals are turning away patients arriving for operations (you have to pay for medical treatment), cinemas unable to open and tourists unable to exchange money.

It could only happen in India! Apart from these problems we had quite a successful trip!

### **Day Care Centre.**

Unfortunately there is little change to the staffing problems as qualified doctors and physiotherapists can command higher salaries outside India. I am pleased to say that the children who are attending are showing good progress and hope that we will be able to recruit additional staff very soon and make full use of the premises.

### **Starting Point School.**

The increase in overall prices together with the rapid decline in the value of the pound overseas meant that the school was rapidly getting to the position where it would soon be unable to meet its commitments (the fall in the pound meant the rent was costing a further £370 per month!). However at the eleventh hour they were advised that a house was being offered free of charge to a bona fide charity. This had arisen as the owner, a Mr Sadhu Singh Biring had passed away and his family who live in the UK decided that they were not going to use the property themselves. The school was moved to the new premises in October and is now at Sangolda only a few minutes away from the Day Care Centre & we are very grateful to the family for this fantastic offer.

The problems with the 'cash crisis' meant that as no one could get hold of 'new money' the school was unable to buy food for the children who were existing on plain boiled rice! Fortunately Roger & I were able to go to one of the few supermarkets that accept debit cards and purchase provisions to last for two weeks using our personal bank cards.

Hopefully the situation will be resolved soon or we will have some hungry and unhappy children.

Congratulations to Valie & Anthony on their recent wedding. Please accept our very best wishes for a long and happy marriage.

***Registered Charity Number: 1100768 (U.K.)***

Here are photos of the new school at Sangolda and some of the children enjoying lunch.



### **Educational Sponsorship Scheme.**

We were able to meet and photograph all but ten of the sponsored children and sponsors should receive up to date photos before Christmas. The remaining ten children had not been able to return from their villages in the neighbouring state of Karnataka following the Diwali holidays as their parents had no money for their bus fares. Hopefully Jane will be able to obtain their photos very soon. We found it very rewarding to see how many of 'our children' were sporting 'Head of House', Head Boy/Girl' or Prefect badges and to meet the five students who have passed their GCSE equivalent exams and are now studying for their 'A' levels.

It just proves that they might belong to very poor families who would not be able to afford school fees but they are capable of achieving academic success.

### **Outreach work.**

Jane and staff continue to visit the slums handing out clothing that you have donated, providing much needed basic food such as rice, lentils, sugar, oil etc and toys for the children. Dozens of families have been helped in this way and credit must be given to Jane and 'Cookie' who carry out this work on our behalf, in their own time and without remuneration.

### **Sponsors & Supporters.**

Thank you to those who have sent me their old Rs 1000 & Rs 500 notes which will be sent to Goa where they can be banked. It is our intention to add this money to a fund which is raising money for a heart operation a little girl desperately needs.

Thanks to:

Daisy Stossel and her school friends who raised £167.50 from a cake stall at their Thornbury School, near Bristol. Well done – this will provide over 1300 meals for the children attending Starting Point.

To Colchester College for their donation following their visit to Goa last January.

To Andrea for sponsoring the stair gates for the new school.

To all of you who contribute to our funds, be you educational sponsors, monthly donors, collectors of coins, or irregular (but often very generous) donors please accept our grateful thanks as without you all collectively we would not be able to carry out our projects.

There is just space enough left for me to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful & prosperous 2017.