



# *Novi Survat Charitable Organisation*

(New Beginnings – for the destitute of Goa)

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## **Newsletter 057 December 2017.**

Is it really December 1<sup>st</sup>? Gracious how this year has flown by – but they do say that as you get older the years go faster! Maybe it is because Roger and I have just returned from Goa that Christmas seems to have suddenly arrived – although many shops in the UK have been selling Christmas goods for months now.

The weather has also changed dramatically here in Devon. We had bright warm sunny days and suddenly it has got very cold with widespread frosts.

The second ashes test starts tomorrow – let's hope our side puts up a better performance than in the first test match.

## **Day Care Centre.**

Ruella the speech therapist who joined us in July seems to be settling in well and already we were able to see an improvement in one of her patients Durgesh.

Dr Smisha who worked at the centre until leaving in 2015 to start a family has advised us that she will be returning to work in February 2018. This will be a great help as it is very difficult to recruit qualified physiotherapists and she knows most of the children who currently attend the centre and was always considered a very valuable member of staff. Thankfully the centre seems to be working well thanks to Dr Mina and Dr Meghan.

## **Educational Sponsorship Scheme.**

Roger & I had the pleasure of meeting nearly all the children who come under the Educational Sponsorship Scheme when they gathered at the Taste of India restaurant in Calangute for the annual photo shoot. It is amazing how much they change when you only see them once a year and I am pleased to say that they are all doing well at school as their school reports (which will be sent to their sponsors) show.

We have ten students shown in the photo who are studying in further education, some taking their equivalent to our 'A' levels and some who are at university stage.



We also had the pleasure of meeting Dr Apika who is currently working towards her post graduate degree which she hopes to attain in 2020. Dr Apika is a wonderful young lady who is an inspiration to all our other students.

### **Starting Point.**

This continues to be a great success thanks to Jane and her staff whose dedication to the children is lovely to see. Most of the children are keen to attend school to learn whilst a few prefer to attend for 'aunty' Grace's cooking and accept that learning is a necessary evil!!

The school has been repainted and a lot of work gone into preparing a lawn with flower borders making it perhaps the most pleasant school in Goa!

### **Outreach programme.**

The staff from Starting Point continue to visit the slums providing clothing and food to the most needy. Most of these people live from day to day, casual workers who go out each day looking for whatever work they can find. If they are lucky then the family will have food to eat – if not they will have to wait for tomorrow. The children who are lucky enough to attend Starting Point School will all have a nutritious two course meal each school day.

Thankfully Roger & I were able to take lots of second hand clothing out with us which will be distributed during December, which are the winter months with temperatures getting as low as 20 degrees at night!! I find it quite amusing to see local people wearing 'puffa' jackets and balaclavas in the early mornings whilst Roger and I are finding it very hot in shirt sleeves.

### **Sponsors and supporters.**

As previously mentioned Roger and I were lucky to meet nearly all of the sponsored children and will be sending out up to date photos and copies of the school reports over the next couple of weeks. There were about four children who for one reason or another were unable to meet us but we hope to have their photos emailed in time for Christmas.

I cannot stress enough how grateful I am to all of you who donate to our work whether it be by sponsoring a child's education, regular monthly or casual donations. They all add up and collectively mean that we can maintain the level of support we can give to those less fortunate than ourselves.

I am often asked why we are helping with poverty in Goa when there is poverty in the UK but believe me you cannot compare the two. There is no state aid in India and the conditions in which these people barely exist have to be seen to be believed.

Whilst most of us in the western world will enjoy the festive season with most overindulging those in the slums of India will be lucky to eat at all.

It is true that India is one of the wealthiest countries in the world but regrettably there is a culture of not helping anyone unless they can repay you hence those at the bottom of humanity have no hope. The vast majority of Indians do not believe in charity and will not help anyone who is 'beneath' them.

This is why your contributions are so vital and enable us to help a comparatively small number of people for who the present is very bleak but whose children will have a much brighter future.

May we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous and peaceful 2018.

Clive.