

APRIL 2020



Nepali Family Inc

Thresh the Mountains (Isaiah 41:15)

PANDEMIC!!!! WHAT A CHALLENGE

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly been a challenge for many, including us! We pulled the pin on travel to Nepal two days before the Government closed the doors. We have delegated our new sister organisation, Mauka (opportunity) Nepal, to manage our work onground. This team of trusted young people who have been helped by our organisation in the past, has become a registered agency in Nepal to plan and administer the needs of all our children. They will manage everything until COVID-19 is no longer our daily concern with our oversight from afar. We thank God that so far no coronavirus cases have been reported among our children.

Since Nepal's education institutions have closed we have sent funds to feed and accommodate all the young people and for that end, to commission the new residential building to house those with no homes. Arjun will manage this building along with his other Welfare Officer responsibilities. We need to keep on sending support. Our children come from the least regarded groups in a Hindu country and are liable to be last in line for relief.

We had arranged some time back to meet in Tansen with a young man who works in disability services in Cairns. We did not make it; but he did. He has sent us some photos of his stay and a lovely letter of praise about the way the children are cared for. We were so cheered by it that we have included the text here.

"Hi Anne and Digby

When arriving to Tansen on a bus the first things that struck me was there was not a tourist in sight at the busy bus station and no one approaching me for a taxi. The way to my home stay was through the town on very steep streets which sure gave me a workout with my backpack on my back for good measure. Some town folk were quite curious and would stare in my direction and then smile. A group of kids on one of these steep streets came to say hello and when one received an elbow touch then everyone wanted one. It felt as though I was the Easter Bunny at Easter.

Luckily I had a Nepali Family Inc brochure with me that had a picture of Silom House, a house for children who are orphaned or had a challenging start to their lives. The owner of the home stay where I stayed (Man Mohan) said he knew of this House and he agreed to take me there. I am very glad that he did as to go anywhere on Tansen roads means a lot of very winding roads and quite a bit of time going from A to B as the landscape is very undulating. Man Mohan took me on many trails here and there and on the way he stopped in to drink some tea with a local. After close to 1 and 1/2 hours we arrived at Silom House.

As I approached Silom House I was warmly greeted by Arjun who is an adopted son of Anne and Digby's. He gave me a tour of the building including the children's rooms, kitchen, dining room, recreation room etc. Many of the children were away at exams when I first arrived however some remained and were very keen to speak in as much English as they could. Many spoke of their aspirations of being a nurse, engineer, teacher etc.

One young man (I believe his name is Niraj) aged around 15 years old spoke very confidently and proudly of his achievements in Tai Kwon Do, soccer and study. Niraj showed me his Tai Kwon Do certificates and talked about how enjoys competitive soccer and that he wants to make something of himself in his life.

There were two people with disabilities at this house that I met. One named Deena appears to be mainly non verbal, however as time went on some words did come out. Deena is certainly a keen dancer and along with her dancing she would like to clap her hands and make happy noises. It was noticeable that some of the teenage girls at the house would assist Deena and others that needed help. Kind of like a group of very caring sisters helping their her younger siblings.

After some time at Silom House I went to the Disability House. This mainly houses people with a vision impairment, some totally

I met people in just about every room in the men's section, so in essence quite a number of people. I then tried to put myself in their situation of living with so many others in a room and having limited or no vision and how challenging this would be. However upon speaking with so many people I was so impressed with everybody's incredibly positive attitude.

Everyone I met stood up when meeting me and confidently said their full name. When speaking they all talked about their studies and how they wanted to hold down jobs and make a good life for themselves. I asked them about interests and the number one sport is definitely cricket. I was told about blind cricket which is played with a ball that makes a noise when it is being delivered as the ball contains ball bearings. The batsman hearing the noise of the ball can identify it's location and hit the ball. I would really like to see a game of blind cricket, it was obvious to me that being able to play this game really meant a lot to these people. Upstairs people were knitting and making various articles of clothing very diligently.

The feeling I got after meeting these people was there is so much they can achieve. Study at university and the like. Employment. Many have formed relationships and some are already parents. Playing sport, being creative and making clothes and art. The other redeeming thought I had was no one complained at all. In fact everyone was so grateful with what they had and there was a level of determination that was easy to recognise in the way people spoke and their body language.

I was then taken back to Silom House where the students were arriving back from school. Popcorn was cooking and everyone got a serving that went down well. After popcorn I played table tennis with many enthusiastic children. It then quickly became study time and even the cheeky children knuckled down to books and began to study. It became apparent to me that these children don't just talk about wanting to do well in life, they are prepared to study and work hard to do it.

After my visits I was taken back to my home stay by Arjun on his trusty motor bike on the very steep and winding roads.

I have an understanding of people with disabilities having worked in the disability sector in Australia for 6 years and my late brother had autism and was non verbal.

To say I was impressed with Silom House and the Disability House would be an understatement. I cannot recall meeting such a large group of inspiring people. It makes me think that perhaps I am not grateful for what I have. I and all of us in Australia have so many more possessions and more money than these people in Tansen. But these people have big smiles, positivity, determination, are so grateful for what they have (which is very little) and I never heard anyone complain, never ever. I think there is a lot to learn from these people.

I hope to visit Tansen again in the future. I think any support and funding these people receive would not be wasted at all. Sometimes when Governments have problems they tend to throw money at the problem and hope it goes away. People are not always on board with Government agendas and it's successes are limited.

In this case everyone I met is benefiting in so many ways such as:

A safe place to live

Structure to their day including study, meals, sports, social and sleep

Building relationships, learning to live and work with others

A positive environment where people are encouraged to achieve their goals

So in this case everyone wants to live in a better environment, they all want to do well in life. Everyone is on board and is so grateful for any assistance they can get. The only impediment to people in Tansen achieving what they want to achieve is the lack of money people have. People from the many disadvantaged families just cannot afford the basics of education, food, decent living arrangements etc that we in Australia take for granted.

Happy to help, HA 8 Apr 2020

To keep up this wonderful situation we shall have to keep sending funds as and when we can to ensure the children are cared for until the crisis is over and education and skills courses can start again. Please help where you can.

Anne and Digby Hoyal

PLEASE HELP

You can donate electronically to: www.nepalifamily.org.au/donate or bank transfer to Bank of Queensland a/c - Nepali Family Inc; BSB - 124 044; A/C NUMBER - 2201 3762