

Dargah Hazrat Inayat Khan Hope Project Newsletter

No. 15

Edited by Selvi Roy and Heiko Schrader

We Enjoy Each Day

It isn't all work and no play at The Hope Project non-formal School. In addition to school work, the children celebrate holidays that mark the diversity of India, including Christmas, Diwali and Eid. They also enjoy regular functions such as the picnics, children's day, field trips and annual school day. In addition, we have lots of special fun workshops such as theater, making kites and masks as well as regular activities in the classrooms that include movies, painting and storytelling.



Making kites and enjoying the sunshine



Children performing at the Urs of Hazrat Inayat Khan



Students appreciate the Lovely Clay at a field trip



Story hour in the library



Children's Day Out



Students testing the e-books



Christmas Wishes



We've had a wonderful Day

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Nizamuddin's Florence Nightingale

"Whenever I visited a hospital I would see many patients come for treatment," writes Noorjahan,* "and I wished I could help them in some way. But I suppressed this desire because I did not know how to make it come true." She had completed class 10 with much difficulty and dared not to dream beyond. She had dropped out of school at the insistence of her stepmother who wanted her to take care of her eight younger siblings. Barely literate himself, her conservative father also believed her place was at home.

It was only when she was 24 that Noorjahan mustered some courage and approached The Hope Project. She was immediately sponsored to undergo training in Geriatric Care. She has now successfully completed her course and is doing a paid Internship.

She was counseled to pursue studies and is planning to enroll in Class 12 at The Hope Project's non-formal School and give the board exams through the Open school system.

(*name changed)



Trainees of the 6 month Food Management training program conducted at ITC Sheraton Saket, a five-star hotel (from left to right) Faraz, Salauddin, Masoom (Hope staff), Raiz and (not pictured) Nazneen.

Five Star Training

The Hope Project keenly reaches out to the young men in the basti too. In recent years it has increasingly focused on connecting community youth with the growing job opportunities available in the modern Indian economy. In collaboration with other organizations, our youth are provided job oriented skills training in fields like hotel management, office administration and even air hostess training.

Salauddin, one such young Basti resident, had dreamed of joining the army but bearing the financial responsibilities of being the eldest son, he dropped out of school. However, he enrolled in a cooking class at The Hope Project, where his skills and enthusiasm led him to be selected for a food management training course at a prominent 5 star hotel.

The Prodigal Son

Like most children in the Basti, Asif's* family has a hard life. His father has been too ill to work for many years. His mother works as a domestic servant. The Rs. 2,000 she earns every month must pay for her husband's medicines and the needs of her five young children squeezed in a two-room house.

At 19, Asif* should have been helping his family. Indeed, he'd been an intelligent boy full of potential. He attended government school and attended support classes at The Hope Project. But the lure of the streets proved too strong.

"I was only four or five," he remembers. "Me and some friends found some cigarettes and started smoking." By 10 he was drinking and by the time he was a teenager he was addicted to different "pills." After a fight he was kicked out of school in 7th grade and took to pick-pocketing, robbing people at knifepoint and even stealing from home to buy drugs.

His friends turned their face when he landed in trouble. His mother wept all day. Then Asif remembered The Hope Project and came to meet his old Teacher. He was welcomed with open arms as The Hope Project never turns the seeker away.

It's no minor miracle but Asif has been clean for three months now. Instead of sleeping off a binge or roaming the streets, he helps his mother with cleaning or taking care of his younger siblings. Instead of stealing and taking drugs, every afternoon he arrives at The Hope Project. He studies different subjects in our support classes hoping to make up for lost time, and next year he will sit for his 10th class board exams. And most importantly he is surrounded by people at The Hope Project who support and encourage him in his dreams. The road ahead of him will not be easy. He still suffers from insomnia. Temptations for this poor boy abound in the Basti. "But I try not to think of that," he says. "Right now I just focus on coming here and my studies." Now Asif is once again a boy with a future.

Small Savings Go a Long Way

On December 16th 2007 as the city shivered under freezing weather conditions, a devastating fire swept through the Basti. Over 21 homes were burned or severely damaged, including that of Shahida, a member of our thrift and credit program.



Shahida was shattered when her roof got burnt in the Basti fire

Shahida's roof was completely destroyed and her home also suffered some damage. The Hope Project raced to help Shahida and other members of the community by donating food, warm clothing and household items. But what Shahida needed most for her family was a roof to shelter them from the bitter cold.

Shahida had joined the thrift and credit program in 2004 after attending our literacy classes for adult women. Her family earnings are meager; she works as a domestic worker and her husband is a rag picker and laborer. Despite this she managed to not only support her school going daughters but also save a good amount for herself.

With her savings of Rs.8,000, Shahida was able to get an emergency loan of Rs.13,000. With this she replaced her roof and household items. The loan carries a low interest and affordable monthly payments. Now the family has a

roof over its head and Shahida's daughters are able to continue with their schooling. The happy girls are regulars at The Hope Project where they attend support classes in the afternoon.

There are currently 384 women in our thrift and credit program who have managed to collectively save almost Rs.1,300,000 on which they earn interest. This is the first time many of them have independent savings. Like Shahida they are able to take loans for various purposes and meet their daily familial requirements and also set up micro ventures for a better future.

Healthy Youth, Healthy Community

The Hope Project has made significant inroads into improving the health of the community. To deepen our access into the Basti, the concept of "community inducers" was introduced in July last year. Coordinated with partner NGO MAMTA, the program selected influential members of the community such as shopkeepers and tailors who have access to large number of people on a daily basis.

Almost 40 of these "inducers" – split almost evenly between men and women – were trained intensively in critical areas such as HIV/AIDS and safe motherhood. The inducers impart awareness on HIV/AIDS and safe sex practices to the general community who visit them. They also serve as a resource on the health facilities that can be availed in the neighbourhood for specific needs.

While a mother may forget to come to the clinic for immunizations, the shopkeeper will see her regularly and be able to remind her. Or he will know which youth is engaging in risky behavior and recommend safe sex practices and HIV testing." Thus important health information reaches the community in a sustainable manner.

There has been an increase in the number of pregnant women registering at the antenatal clinic and more men are coming in to get tested for HIV. As a result, The Hope Project was invited to discuss its learnings with other NGOs and some of them have proposed to incorporate the program in their health clinics.



Community youth spread health messages on HIV/AIDS and general vaccination for children



<http://www.sufiorder.org/>
<http://www.hope-project.de/>
<http://www.hopeprojectindia.org>

DARGAH HAZRAT INAYAT KHAN HOPE PROJECT

Initiated by Pir Vilayat Khan in 1975

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Donation accounts Please send your donation to one of the following accounts. Do not forget your name and address!

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Hope on Wheels: Mobile Health Unit

After a lot of hard work, we're pleased to announce our mobile health unit, Hope on Wheels, will be ready for operation this summer. As explained in our previous newsletter, The Hope Project is looking to expand the reach of its health programs to the city's outskirts with poor medical facilities where many slum dwellers were re-settled by the govt. Many resident of the Nizamuddin basti too had been re-settled in far off places like Narela.

Our focus will be health care and education for children and youth many of whom are out of school and working. Thus they have limited support of caring adults and families for their welfare. The mobile clinic will visit three or four different locations, offering primary, promotive, preventive and curative health care.



The final design of our health unit