

FRIENDS OF SHAMAYITA MATH

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December 2020

Dear members and Friends of Shamayita Math

As we all know, India is a very large country - appr. 80 times bigger than Denmark - and appr. 3000 kilometers from North to South and from East to West. With various climatic conditions and many peoples, languages and cultures. In some places very advanced in other places more rural with poorer areas.

It can be difficult for an individual person to support people globally, but we can do a great difference when we support locally. That is what our organization strives to do by supporting the Indian NGO, Shamayita Math, in a rural District of Bankura appr. 400 kilometers from Kolkata. Due to our frequent visits, we can attest that our support helps.

Unfortunately, this year has been overshadowed by the corona - in Denmark as well as in India. This year, no one from our organization, has had the opportunity to visit Shamayita Math. Fortunately, we have had two opportunities - via zoom - to 'meet' face to face with Mothers Anahata and Prajnamita. That's been a good way to exchange information and it's my clear impression they appreciate the contact with and interest from their friends in Denmark.



Mother Anahata and Mother Prajnamita attending the board-meeting on zoom in November 2020

From March 23rd., there has been lock-down in India and all temples and schools have been closed. The students have been sent home. The Convent School for girls with appr. 700 students have established distance learning for the upper classes - they are called cyber students. But it is a problem that many of the students from the rural areas cannot participate, because they do not have smartphones or laptops. Even if they have a device, it can be a problem to connect to the internet - you may have to walk a distance to find a hot-spot. For Shamayita Math it is also a problem to keep the school operating with distance learning, if you don't receive school fees.



Teachers are running small out-door schools in the children's home-villages

The village school in Darangpara, which we have funded and support, is also closed. Within the rules, the students have been divided in smaller groups who - respecting social distance - meet with a teacher a couple of hours several times a week in an open space. Here the teacher can give some instruction and tasks. On Indian National Day the task was to drawing and colouring of the Indian flag. The teacher also bring some snacks to the children as a motivation to attend. During normal times the students would have been served a hot meal - rice and dhal. The kids might also get a note from the teacher to their parents suggesting some homework. Mothers hope, that normal schooling can restart come April, when the next school year begins. They fear that some students might not return in April because the have been used to working in the field or doing other things. Elderly kids in a rural village do no go idle around. So it was also in Denmark earlier. My father was sent to work for a farmer, when he was twelve. I really hope the corona situation will improve next year, making it possible for all children - in Denmark and India - to return to school.

Christianshavn-Slotsholmen Rotary Club has donated 7000 DKR to establish a Dining Shed at the village school. Here the students can take their meal and be protected against sun or rain. It has been delayed due to corona, but is now under construction. At least, the students can look forward to some improvement at their school, when they return.

The hospital at Shamayita Math is functioning. There is about 15 persons hospitalized per day, some of them for eye operations. Out patients treatment pr. day runs to 35-50. Patients with corona symptoms are referred to government clinics in neighboring cities. There has not been many corona cases in the area, but one can fear that not all are discovered. Not all people from a village have the possibility - nor the means - to go to a doctor. The mobile clinic from Shamayita Math is functioning and helping a lot.



Patients after their catharact-operations

Our annual meeting will take place February 15th 2021 at Bente Hagelund, Kretavej 39, 2300 København S.

By the end of 2020, we have 51 members - a small reduction. Unfortunately, we could not have events this year, where we might attract new members. But new members are more than welcome – the need of support will not decrease in the future.

7 of our members have a sponsorship for a child in the village school. Contact Bente Hagelund, if you are interested in being a sponsor. It costs 700 DKK pr. Year. Mail: bentehagelund@hotmail.com

This year we have transferred 21.050 DKK to Shamayita Math. If anyone in the spirit of Christmas would like to give a donation to Shamayita Math work in the village school in Darangpara, it would be greatly appreciated. You can use mobile pay: box97814 or bank transfer to reg. number: 5324 konto number: 0251179.

With all my best wishes for the Christmas season and for a happy new year.

Lars Fynbo
Chairman

