

# Bangla Hope



Bangladesh Christian School Sponsorship America Newsletter

No. 35

April - June, 2003

"Uncle," the old man pled through a translator, "please let my granddaughter go to school." His hands grasped the shoulders of the ten-year-old in front of him. She nervously looked down at our shoes.

The KMMS principal had warned us he was bringing a man who had tried to enroll a handicapped child. He described the girl, then finished, "But what can we do?"

Now they stood before us. The old man—eyes pleading. The girl—with scars, but no hands. Just one thumb and a hanging piece of flesh where her right hand had once been. "Runa can learn," the grandfather continued.

"But can she take care of herself?" Dave asked.

"Yes, yes," he assured. "Her hands got run over by a train when she was six. She's learned to get along."

While the three men talked, I observed the girl and her injuries. Train accident? I wondered. Not likely. Someone could have disabled her on purpose. . . so she'd earn more as a beggar. It's such a horrible practice. And so common. With her handicaps, what could she do other than beg—with or without an education? But we have to at least try.

I tapped Dave on the shoulder. "What if we hired someone to help her?"

Swpna came to mind as a potential helper. An especially sweet older girl, if anyone could help Runa, Swpna could.

At the noon meal, we were shocked at how deftly Runa ate. That afternoon we took her and several other girls to market via rickshaw van—a bicycle with a flat bed on the back to carry people, produce, or anything else a driver can get to stay on. The fear left Runa's eyes when she realized we were buying dresses, shoes, comb, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, bucket (for bathing), dipper (for pouring water over her head), towel, and trunk for her.

Runa's skill without hands amazed us over the next few days. She combed her hair, washed her clothes, and swept her room. She wrote with her thumb against her wrist. She played with a ball and could catch it.

Runa ate with delight—she'd probably never before had three meals in one day. She and Swpna soon became fast friends. And Runa's usual expression became a sweet and gentle smile (Swpna's sponsor is truly making a difference for Runa, too.)



After several months at the boarding school, Runa went home to live with her grandfather who lives in the village right next door. But she still attends school daily. Runa learns quickly.

In school, Runa will get physical food. She will learn about cleanliness and other healthy habits. And she will have the opportunity to know Jesus as a personal friend.

This girl, destined to be a beggar, could one day be an inspiring teacher in one of our schools.

## RESULTS OF SPONSORING

Choosing Jesus: Daisy was with the first group of orphans who entered our orphanage in the west, Bangla Hope Children Center, in 1997. Daisy's father had fallen from a tree. His severe injuries necessitated two surgeries, followed by an infection and tetanus. He was left paralyzed. Daisy's mother was forced by circumstances to work in the paddy fields and as a housemaid. Unable to care for Daisy, the mother tearfully brought her to the new orphanage. While we were in Bangladesh this trip, we saw what Christian education can do for these young people.



The face of Daisy, along with the faces of 164 of her classmates at SAMS boarding school, glowed with joy as they were baptized last November. In addition, forty students at KMMS boarding school chose to be baptized. Gopalganj boarding school has twenty-two Hindu students attending this school year. Two have been baptized and others are studying the Bi-

ble. BASC college is also having a positive impact for Jesus in the lives of students. During this school year sixty students chose baptism.

Graduations: Malloy, a short, stocky-built young man was eighteen when we began sponsoring him. He came from a Hindu background but had converted to Christianity. While at our college in Bangladesh and later at Spicer College in India, his enthusiasm for Jesus was contagious. His ready smile and easy-going manner is an asset at our college in Bangladesh where he is an accountant and will be teaching some classes.

Total graduates for this school year: five students from Spicer College, nine students from BASC College in Bangladesh, and thirty-seven students from twelfth grade.

It's exciting to see evidence that sponsorship of these students is worth all the time, effort, and money that is provided by you, the sponsors, donors, staff, and volunteers of Bangladesh Christian School Sponsorship.

Our Utah P.O Box is now CLOSED.



Make certain your envelopes are addressed to:  
BCSS  
P.O. Box 6853  
Kennewick, WA 99336-0601

## PROJECT UPDATES

Water: Decisions and progress continue toward bringing water free of arsenic and salt to the students. The leaders in the town near the Gopalganj school have promised that we can use drinking water from the tanks they are installing.

At KMMS we originally had nine tube wells for all of the water needs. Gradually, as with the country-wide crises, all but one have become contaminated with arsenic. It will be only a matter of time before it also is unusable. Installation of an underground 50,000-gallon tank is scheduled to be completed in May, 2003. A building housing a computer lab and classroom over the tank will provide the roof to drain rainwater into channels emptying into the reservoir tank. This filled tank will hold enough drinking water for the students for seven months, even if there is no rain. But, in this monsoon area of the world, heavy rains are common three months of the year and moderately heavy rains another three months.

Motorcycles: This project has been temporarily put on hold because of more urgent needs for the children and some changes in office personnel in Bangladesh.

Hill Tracts: Eastern Bangladesh is the poorest area of the country. The people rely on a good crop of rice for survival, but often they must resort to eating insects and leaves to stave off starvation. Tapioca root is eaten during the winter months when the rice is gone. Hill Tracts boarding school and orphanage in this area have many needs. The administration building has no doors or windows. Some students have chairs but the majority study on the floor. The thatched cafeteria provides a small area for meal preparation. Unfortunately, the students must eat in the dirt area surrounding the school or carry their food to their dorms.

Gopalgonj: Because of the desperate need for boarding schools, we are expanding Gopalgonj to include grades 7 and 8 instead of just grades 4 to 6. The building we planned on renovating for the girls' dorm was condemned. Alternatives were limited, so we made the decision to proceed with a new dorm. It is scheduled for completion in May, 2003. It will house 80 to 100 girls instead of the 50 who are now attending. Building is also proceeding on showers and squats for the boys. Until this is completed, the boys continue to bathe in the pond—the same pond used for drinking water. The used bunk beds we obtained, are being dismantled, hauled by rickshaw van, boat, and truck 300 miles to the school. Once they arrive, the reassembly, welding, and repainting will begin.

Leggings—We said \$1 a pair but . . . “We have just found the most wonderful way to buy leggings you can imagine,” Beverly wrote in an e-mail. Sweetie, our accountant in the BCSS of-



rice in Dhaka, found an export manufacturer that made hundreds of pairs of lined jeans. They are quite well made and very warm. For some reason, the exporter did not take them. The manufacturer is trying to cover their costs and get rid of them. The girls can wear the lined jeans under their dresses and the boys can also use them. Sweetie bargained to buy many for 30TK (approximately 50 cents) each. For all who sent funds for this project, twice as much was accomplished as anticipated!

Stickers: Many are continuing to send stickers for the students. Thank you. Beverly loves to deliver these treats.

Willing Seamstress: Ginger Brockman has been sewing clothing for the children of Bangladesh for four years. She continues after coming home from her full-time teaching job. If anyone would like to donate fabric to her, you may send it to her at: 212 Pinehill Road, Newport, WA 99156.



## SPECIAL PEOPLE HELPING CHILDREN

Thank you

- ~ Gardner Adventurer Club for saving stickers for the students in Bangladesh and money for the orphans
- ~ All who shared with the truly needy in Bangladesh in lieu of family Christmas gifts.
- ~ Those who are sharing information, newsletters, and videos with their friends.
- ~ Longmont ladies birthday club who decided that, rather than receiving twenty or so birthday cards from other members, one would be adequate. Then an envelope would be passed and everyone would put in the amount they would normally spend for a card. (They sent nearly \$400.)
- ~ “Dear BCSS,  
This money is for the Gopalgonj Dorm beds. We know how nice it feels to get into a nice warm bed on cold winter nights. We hope that this donation of \$10 can help you. My Nanny saved \$6 and I saved \$4. God bless your work!  
Love, Condra and Elisabeth”

## MEMORIAL GIFTS

- ~ In memory of Virnona Gratias by Wayne Searson
- ~ In memory of Leonard Rockwell by Evelyn Rockwell



<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>AMOUNT NEEDED</u>	<u>AMOUNT RECEIVED</u>
KMMS—water storage	\$ 9,000	\$ 2,772
KMMS—school room and computer lab	\$ 9,000	—
KMMS—computer lab equipment	\$15,000	—
Gopalgonj—girl's dorm and beds	\$38,000	\$ 6,720
Gopalgonj—boy's squats and showers	\$ 4,000	—