

SPRING
2017



SHANTI LEPAHILFE
DORTMUND E.V.

NEWSLETTER

ISSUED IN SPRING 2017

HOPE

THE SUN IS THERE. IT NEVER TIRES
AND RISES EACH DAY ANEW.
PEOPLE GET UP,
THEY BELIEVE IN A NEW DAY.
PEOPLE SEE THE SUN RISE,
THEY FEEL THE WARMTH OF ITS RAYS,
AND THEY BELIEVE IN THE LIGHT AGAIN.

HOPE IS THERE.
THERE ARE STILL CHILDREN WITH LAUGHING EYES.
THERE ARE STILL MANY PEOPLE,
UNDER WHOSE SKIN A HEART BEATS.
A SUN OF HOPE RISES
WITH EACH GOOD PERSON IN THE WORLD.

IGIVING EACH OTHER HOPE MEANS:
BOLSTERING EACH OTHER, GIVING EACH OTHER A LIFE.
WE CANNOT CHANGE THE DESERT AT ONCE,
BUT WE CAN START WITH A SMALL OASIS.
WHERE A FLOWER CAN BLOSSOM AGAIN,
THOUSANDS OF FLOWERS SHALL BLOSSOM ONE DAY.

BY PHIL BOSMANS



DEAR FRIENDS OF THE SHANTI-FAMILY,

I am writing this spring letter to you from Kathmandu. I have a lot to tell you and I am so thankful that I always notice that you receive the news of the wellbeing but also the grief of the people we care for with a large amount of empathetic compassion and your generosity is what make our assistance for those in need possible. Thank you!

MY LUGGAGE

When I arrived in Nepal at the beginning of March, it was still extremely cold and I was really pleased about the large number of children's socks that dear friends had knitted before sending them to me shortly before my departure.

I was also happy about a donation of exactly 100 – in words: one hundred! – sleeping bags!

Most of them were distributed to the children from the earthquake zone so that they do not freeze in their bamboo huts at night. The others are especially providing warmth to the old people. After all, they all had to move out of their tent city because the neighbours wanted to have their soccer pitch back...

I also had donated leather and fur in my luggage for our shoes that are made from car tyre tubes. A lot of consideration is being given to improving these shoes in many ways so that they are really comfortable for the children and adults to wear, without them pinch and Gora Singh is proud to be asked by our volunteers when they ask him if he could also make some for him!

The "mercenary" shoes really look cute with their leather applications and we shall also save a large amount of money because all of the Shanti children and adults shall be issued with this footwear. We

still need to train a couple of people for this – there are so many people who are waiting for such a pair.

BHAN

Not having any shoes is however only one of the many hardships that we encounter here.

We had much difficulty however with having to accept the diagnosis that a young man was given. His name is Bhan. A female friend brought him to us. She runs a soup kitchen at the Boudha Temple in the winter. She entrusted Bhan to us in the hope that we could possibly improve his condition by giving him medical treatment.

The saddening reality is however that he is suffering from a progressive muscle weakness (muscular dystrophy). It was because of this hereditary disease that four of our children, the siblings Suman, Himan, Singh and Robi, suffered from a respiratory failure when each of them was 15 years old.

Bhan is now 20 years old but it is our impression that he still has some time to live and we want to make it so nice for him as possible.

Bhan has a dream: he wants to continue to learn and go to college. He successfully completed the 10th grade. We now need to find a college that it is close enough to enable him to be pushed there in his wheelchair. Perhaps we can bring the college to offer us a socially acceptable fee for him. We would so like to help this ambitious young person to live his dream in the short time that is available to him!

His father was killed in the earthquake and he also has six sisters and a brother in his family. They are all not affected by the disease, thank god! The family does not have any money however, especially not for the further education of the brother with such a severe disability. What a blessing that care for him!



He also want to help the weaker pupils at Shanti by the way. That will provide him with a lift and he shall quickly find new friends and get over his homesickness.

PARI

An event occurred 16 days ago that has been concerning us very intensively since then: A patient with a mental disability used violence against his pregnant wife who was also very impaired so that the baby was born prematurely in the 32nd week of pregnancy, it weighed 1,400 Gramm.

One of our female volunteers, an examined paediatric nurse, took the small one to the local paediatric clinic, together with Heiko. But the reaction of the staff there caused much horror to both of them: the tiny being was immediately given a penicillin injection without a diagnosis being established! When they asked flabbergasted, the doctor on duty merely murmured "in case she has an inflammation..."

Neither Janina nor Heiko saw a solution other than that to bring the tiny child to our apartment. We were able to heat our living room after all. That was an urgent necessity as Pari (= "cherub", this was the name given to the small one by an employee) quickly cooled off until she had a body temperature of 34°C. The thermal bed was not working and the bulb in the infrared light broke twice.

But we "kangarooed" the delicate child together with our volunteers, i.e. we layed her on our hearts alternately. Pari evidently benefitted from this: she slept satisfied, making short snorting sounds at times, until the next feed. Heiko especially assumed responsibility for her care. He changed her nappies and fed her every three hours day and night.

The biological mother rejected the child but we are

placing our trust in finding a family at Shanti that shall lovingly bring her up. But before that is possible, she needs to get stronger and be provided with lots of caring love.

All of the volunteers are taking an active part in how the small one is faring.

AMY

Our female friend Amy Loewan expresses this in a very special way. She is an artist and lives in Canada. She is now with us an paints members of the Shanti family using watercolours. She also captured Pari on paper with delicate colours. To see more of her works of art, go to www.amyloewan.com.

We all show great interest in Amy's work with us. She is now concerning herself with a special project: when asked by me, our talented volunteer Gustav built an impressing long wooden pigeon together with our carpenters and out children. He has surrounded it with wire mesh and covered it in papier mâché.

Amy has now given our children the idea of painting colourful feathers on paper together with the other volunteers, before painting their names on it in silver – for Shanti's 25th anniversary this year. These feathers shall then be glued onto the dove of peace as "Shanti" means "peace" after all.

I can hardly described how the pleasure that the children showed when painting moved me! I would especially like to have shown you the cheering of the disabled children about their work!

DIPA

I would like to inform you of an important change at Shanti: we have been able to acquire a young lady, Dipa Sedhain, as manager. The former boo-



keeper Satish Gautam, who was also responsible for the management, wants to go abroad for further training.

Dipa was in America for more than two years in order to train in the banking business. Here, she learned how to work in a team. She is open to our ideas and we are planning together with pleasure, how we can do even more for the benefit of the patients at Shanti. Her good knowledge of English makes it easy for her to communicate with our visitors and the volunteers.

We now all hope that she will not allow herself to be intimidated in a society in which women are still deemed to be inferior so that men either do not like to be told anything by them or they even do not allow women to tell them anything...

MASS EXAMINATIONS

One of our volunteers, a female doctor, has fulfilled one of my long held wishes: she has started to examine all of the school children together with our doctor, in addition to her creating a corresponding card index. Mass examinations that are perfectly normal in Germany, are unknown in Nepal. For example, we have something as blessed as the regular examining of small children such as with the U1 examination. But nothing like this exists in Nepal. We have also been unable to win over any of our doctors for this.

I hope that our school teachers shall not cooperate closely with our doctor. The can then quickly send a child to the outpatient's clinic should his or her state of health change and Dr. Kumar can than take an immediate look in the file, get an idea and the treat the patient in a targeted manner.

An ongoing interlocking action on the part of the school and the clinic for the well-being of the children obviously needs to be practised. I hope however that the results have powers of persuasion so that the files are kept up to date after the first examinations. Healthy children simply learn easier!

DENTAL SURGERY

This also resulted in us coming closer to realising our dream of a dental surgery. We want to set it up on the ground floor of our clinic. Many of our children have caries, after all.

The founder of "Zahnärzte ohne Grenzen" (Dentists without Borders) is currently here in Nepal – a woman with wonderfully energetic and positive energy. We asked her to help us with words and deeds. We are now tackling the project with zest together with her.

The provision of free dental treatment would be such a help to the poor! Who cannot forget the feeling of nagging toothache!? The poor in Nepal are unable to get rid of it however as this costs money and that is something that they do not have.

SHOPPING SPREE ...

When I am in Nepal, I am repeatedly aware of how privileged our life in Germany with its numerous safeguards is! We are therefore always pleased that you help the Shanti family to at least be saved from the blatant misery.

For example, we were able to go on a shopping spree. A giant market was held for the Shiva Ratri festival. This time, we were able to buy 500 pairs of underpants for the school children together with 200 pairs of long trousers and 300 shirts for the adults, 100 cushion inlets and another large number of necessities.

When we brought the large load to the centre, many thankful thoughts went out to you! The radiating looks



on their faces when the new items were distributed would have warmed all of your hearts!

RECONSTRUCTION

I am now certain that you would like to know what the situation concerning the reconstruction of Sindhupalchowk is two years after the earthquake.

An important step was the recent appointment of Dr. Pokharel, a competent man who was trained in Germany, as the Chairman of the state Reconstruction Committee. He is a person on whom hopes are pinned and who is characterised by great reliability and efficiency. It was also him who created the possibility of low-interest credit facilities. It has only been possible to write the geological expertise for the development potential of the slopes in Sindhupalchowk now. The geologists agreed to initially wait for two monsoon periods.

The result is devastating: there are not as many secure surfaces as was originally assumed and all of the plans had to be converted to a lighter design.

A female architect from Portugal under the capable supervision of the experienced local building contractor Prabin Rawal has now carried this out. The costs for the required materials have been carefully calculated: on the basis of the exchange rate from 3rd of April, the costs amount to 9,475 euros per house.

Sangita Shresta-Einhaus – perhaps you can recall her: the wonderfully committed hotel owner who took care of the Camp Hope refugee camp – is now planning the process of the reconstruction in cooperation with the village committee and the Portuguese helpers, encourage the victims and repeatedly show them the possible perspectives. When I consider how a relatively manageable amount can provide a family with the opportunity of being

provided with a protecting roof in the future, then I want to do all in my power to collect as many sacks of cement and sand, steel girders and wooden beams as possible.

I can today already imagine how the people shall be standing in their doorway one day – thankful for the material support and at the same time proud that they have built their houses with their own hands.

FESTIVAL ON 9TH OF JULY

All that now remains for me is to extend a heartfelt welcome to our 25th anniversary celebration. We wish to celebrate it with you in the form of a festive Service of thanksgiving at 11.30 a.m. on Sunday, 9 July, in the city church of St. Reinoldi in Dortmund City Centre.

This shall be followed by much opportunity to converse, gain pleasure from Amy's paintings and photographs from Shana, a photo artist who is currently here – obviously with food and drink. We shall also have a large table on which we shall be presenting the diverse products from our workshops.

So that we can make the necessary arrangements, please register using the enclosed card by the end of June.

I now wish you pleasure in the new life in spring from all my heart!

Stay protected!

Your
Marianne Grossspietsch