



25 Church Lane  
Nether Poppleton  
York YO26 6LF  
Telephone : 01904 786880  
E-mail : mail@projectmala.org.uk  
Website : www.projectmala.org.uk

# Mala

## News

Patrons:  
The Maharaja of Benares  
Felicity Kendal CBE  
Sir Mark Tully OBE  
Lady Young  
Madeline Weinrib

Issue 25 June 2011

**An action programme for the elimination of child labour in the hand knotted carpet industry India**

### New School opens at Turkahan

February 10th 2011 was an important day for Project Mala and the villages near Turkahan. This was the day we opened our new Turkahan School. For the last six years we have been struggling to provide education opportunities



in a tiny building given to us by the Forestry Commission. The school was always too small for the amount of children who wanted to attend. We bought some land to replace it some years ago but never had the money to build a new school. We were fortunate to meet Baal Dan, a USA charity, who gave us \$30,000 for the building work. You can see a short film on the school opening on YouTube by searching for Turkahan School.



We were also fortunate to have Sir Mark Tully OBE to officially open it for us. The children put on a fine show with Virendra, one of the Middle School pupils, describing all the dances to the 500 guests speaking in English and Hindi.



### Working Children

We all get very concerned when we hear of children working, particularly when they are working on clothing, carpets or anything for western consumption. We should, however, be aware that child labour is everywhere in rural India. It is hard to accept, but it provides valuable income for these poor people.



Refusing to buy cheap goods will not help the families and would likely mean that they would lose jobs and have to work on some other, less well paid, work.

Project Mala addresses the problem by providing schools for the children so that through education they can find better jobs when they reach working age. Until then many children have to work to help out the family income.



In a recent survey we found that most of the children helped out the families in their out of school hours and much of it on paid work.



### I want to stay at school

We have all told our children and grandchildren how important school is, but it is unusual for children to choose school instead of being with their parents. Manish and Anup were torn between going with their mother to join their father in Punjab and staying at Mala Turkahan School. They chose to live with their grandfather so they could continue with their education.



### Hard road to school

We have mentioned before how hard it is for many children to come to school, but some children at Turkahan have it harder than most as they have to walk 10 kilometres, including climbing a steep hill. Not easy in 40°C temperature.



## The first Mala Secondary school opens

Another step forward for the education facilities at Project Mala is the establishment of a Secondary School. This new school will take just 30 children but will allow the most gifted children from our Middle Schools to reach their full potential. Because it is based at our flagship school of Guria and will take in children from Patehra Middle School, which is 60 kilometres away, we have established a boarding facility. The beds are primitive by western standards but are much more comfortable than the children have at home.

Our Teaching Advisor, Anne Bate, is very excited about the new Secondary School. She is now planning the science block and has set her sights on getting some of these children to University. This will be a major landmark for children who may well have grown up illiterate without Project Mala schools.



### Busking to support a child

There is no common profile of sponsors, apart from a shared desire to help people who are less fortunate. Not all are rich enough that they can pay for their sponsorship without raising the money first. Douglas wanted to sponsor a child with us but his parents told him that he would have to raise the money himself. In two hours of busking on the South Bank, London, he raised enough for a whole year of sponsorship.



### Visit by Archways School

Professor Zutshi of JNU in New Delhi is Deputy Chairman of Project Mala India. He has had a long relationship with Archways School of Stroud in the UK and organised a visit for the children of Archways to our Guria school. The children held joint lessons, played games and enjoyed a meal together. The English children learned a lot about Indian school life and our children had a great chance to practice their English.



### Some Numbers

55	The number of children that never missed a single lesson during the year
1,124	The number of parents that attended parent/teachers meetings
93.65%	Average attendance at all schools

### Anne joins us as Teaching Advisor

Anne Bate has been sponsoring a child with Project Mala for eight years. She took an interest in our work and wanted to do more. As a trained teacher she volunteered to spend two months in India teaching English to our Middle School children. During her time working with our schools, Anne developed a good relationship with the teaching staff and became very involved with the opening of Turkanan School. We were so impressed with the work Anne was doing that we asked her if she would help direct the education aspect of our work.



### Mother's sacrifice for daughter's education

When Neetu Devi passed the exam to go to the new Secondary School, the teacher thought that she would not be able to take up her place. The new school would mean Neetu boarding and her mother needed her to look after her six siblings.

However, at the parents meeting to discuss the position, her mother readily agreed, making the comment "I will make any sacrifice for my daughter to get a good education. Project Mala looks after children better than parents".

