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Mala News

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Old beliefs continue

With our children doing so well academically, it is easy to forget the primitive conditions that still exist in their home villages. Every so often this is brought into sharp focus when children have



an accident or become ill. Last month, Kirti, a girl in our Amoi Primary School, was bitten in the night (probably by a snake). Her parents called the village Guru who did some chanting but sadly she died the next day. It is easy for villagers to believe in these rituals, as sometimes after a bite the child gets better. They don't realise that not all snakes are poisonous. The

picture shows mothers bringing their children to be blessed.

We all have some superstitions, but village life in rural India is steeped in superstitions and rituals, which can have a dramatic effect on their lives. We had one child drop out of school because her parents thought she was being caught by a ghost as she had to pass a certain tree which was directly on her way to school.

These strong beliefs in ghosts and demons are very real and most temples have pujas (prayer rituals) to deal with the inner body spirit that is causing the illness. The villager in this photo is from Guria village near to one of our schools. He is crawling 35 kilometres to Mirzapur to visit a temple for a prayer ritual.



Mukesh sent me many stories from the schools, but far too many for this newsletter. They are, however, very interesting, so I have put them onto a link for you to read. [Village stories](#).

These problems are difficult for our staff to deal with, as villagers often prefer village rituals to a western style doctor. We cannot go against parents' wishes, but one day we hope to appoint a school doctor with a mobile clinic so we can visit the villages and try and gain the confidence of

the villagers. If any of our readers have connections which might help us establish this facility, please get in touch.

If you know anyone that would be interested in this newsletter please pass it on.

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