

"Voice of HOPE"

Newsletter of the HOPE House

March, 2007

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Dear Friends,



Spring season greetings to you. 2007 is beginning to show the signs of fruits of our workers labor because our children are shining like bright stars in every activity that they are pursuing. It is this change that is making us to be thankful to our Almighty and also to each of you for making this work possible. For us, Summer is here and indications are that, it is not going to be kind. Pray for the HOPE House work that it reaches out to more needy children. **Ruby Nakka.**

NEWS:

1. Recently in India, "Child Labor" (including domestic help for below 14 years of age) has become illegal. To help our children understand various child rights (including child labor), started a debate competition for the children on Sunday evenings and they do go at each other. We have covered topics like "Importance of Towns vs Villages", "Who is more important? Girls or boys", and "Is it essential and useful to have school lunch" etc.
2. For the first time, all the HOPE House kids and the staff went for a picnic to a nearby hilly station on January 16th. We got up early in the morning and traveled by local buses to reach the destination by 9:00 AM. Kids immediately got down to playing with a slide, a swing and running around in the spacious open ground which is so limited at our current location. There were so many fruit trees and the gooseberry tree was the favorite of our kids. Children participated in different kinds of competitions and activities. Hosts gave us a superb lunch and frequent coconut water, tea and other snacks. Before we knew it, it was time to return home by 5:00 PM.
3. Two of our children (7 & 9 year old sisters) lost their 9 months old brother to HIV/ AIDS on January 17th. It was hard on all of us knowing how much our girls loved their little brother. On visitation days, their mother used to bring the little boy and they would hold him and play with him for the entire time. They were taken home by our staff to be with their grieving mother. Other children were helped and counseled appropriately about death and grief.
4. HH kids celebrated India's Republic day in a very unique way. Our staff and the kids joined together and made paper flags, headbands, and wrist bands in Indian Colors. On the 26th January, they wore them, and carried 10 flags each to distribute in their school. Our staff also took extra interest to educate them about the importance of India's Republic day. We ended the day with a special meal.
5. Started subscribing to a local language (Tamil) newspaper for the HOPE House on January 30th to improve their Tamil reading skills. Initially it was a challenge to make them read but as they were prompted to read the stories of their choice, participation level has increased. It is a joy to see the kids discuss the stories they read (about animals, serials, food, movies and accidents etc) with each other. Slowly but surely the objective of improving their reading skills seems to be improving.
6. Two of our girls (sisters of 6 and 7 years of age), lost their remaining parent (mother) to AIDS on January 30th. Our staff accompanied the kids to their home to be with their grieving grand mother.
7. All our children's mid term exam results have come and this is what we have. In all the five classes of their school, first ranks were held by the HOPE House kids. This is something we worked hard for but never expected this good. Hats off to our children and their in-house tutor (Shanthy). Also two of our kids won first two prizes in Hand writing competition.

- HOPE House has conducted an essay writing competition at Ida Scudder School in Vellore for the 11th and the 12 grade students. Topic was "Child rights in India and my role". Prize of 500 rupees was given to an 11th grade student Mr. Adarsh. Ruby Nakka also had the opportunity to address the student's assembly about Child rights in India.

HOPE House spends approximately 5000 rupees on monthly groceries (including food for 14 children + 2 staff, cosmetics such as soaps, shampoos, toothpaste and disinfectants). HOPE House welcomes generous hearted individuals to underwrite our expenses for a month/ fortnight/ week

If you're interested, kindly write to us at indiahopehouse@gmail.org

VISITATIONS: More than anything, HOPE House appreciates the TIME that people are willing to spend with our children because not very often they get to spend quality time with others other than our staff. HOPE House recognizes and appreciates the effort of the following people for their willingness to spend time.

- Fifteen students of local medical school (Christian Medical College & Hospital) came and spent time with our children on January 13th. They also brought snacks for them.
- Mr. Sudhakar Rajamoney of Naperville, IL, USA visited the HOPE House on January 25th. He enjoyed interacting with the kids and understanding the operations of the house. Sudhakar took pictures with the kids and as usual they loved it.
- Rev. Lou Knowles, and Ms. Edwina Youth Scudder, Executive Director and the Chairperson respectively of Vellore Board of New York, NY, USA visited the HOPE House on February 2nd. When they found out that the HOPE House kids are in need of toys, they brought bags full of toys.
- Kingston's family of Bombay has visited the HOPE House on February 15th. They brought snacks for the kids.
- A retired plastic surgeon Dr. Mani Mani of Kansas City, KS of USA visited the HOPE House on February 23rd. During interaction time, a 7 year old Sangeetha asked Dr. Mani if he has parents! Dr. Mani handled the question with tremendous grace and sensitivity.
- Mr. Paul & Amuda Venugopal (Visually impaired couple) have celebrated their daughter's birthday at the HOPE House. They fed us all with yummy food.
- A local retail merchant (Mr. Velu) visited the HOPE House on February 25th with snacks, towels and pencils for the kids.
- Mr. & Mrs. Milton of Vellore visited the HOPE House and purchased 950 rupees worth of groceries for the HOPE House.

FOR THE U.S. READERS

A new law (Pension Protection Act) was signed into an act by the President George W. Bush (on August 17th, 06) which allows distributions from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA's) be transferred to the choice of your charity without tax implications.

Contact us at indiahopehouse@gmail.com for more information. Unfortunately this bill will be in place only till December 31st, 2007 so time is critical.

WANTED

HOPE House is seeking interested individuals/ groups to become sponsors to our children. Currently 4 of the 14 have the sponsors.

Apart from regular updates, sponsors will have an online access to child specific site to send/ receive communication.

If you're interested, kindly write to us at indiahopehouse@gmail.org

If you're touched by our message and inspired to support us, please follow the details below

- If you're living in the US: Address your payments to "HOPE House International" and mail them to

**HOPE House International
P.O.Box: 7438
Chico, CA – 95927-7438**

(HOPE House International is a non profit organization in the US (501c3) and your contributions are tax deductible maximum allowed by the US law)

- If you're living in India: Address your payments to "The HOPE House" and mail them to

**The HOPE House
16/28, 25th East Cross Road
Gandhinagar
Vellore - 632006**

(The HOPE House is a non profit organization in India (80G) and your contributions are tax deductible maximum allowed by the Indian law)