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premdan

newsletter October 2020

PANDEMIC AND THE HUMANITARIAN CRISES



The Nightmare and the Plight of the Migrants:

India experienced the onset of the Virus on 30th January 2020, when the first case of the Corona virus was detected in Kerala from among students, returning from Wuhan, China.

After realizing the gravity of the pandemic, our Prime Minister announced a 'Janata Curfew' (people curfew) on 22nd March followed by a complete nationwide lockdown on 24th March.

On 24th March there were only 564 infected cases reported from 175 out of the 739 districts in India. All of a sudden millions of people were stranded. At the stroke of midnight, millions of migrant workers, daily wagers and informal workers lost their jobs, livelihoods, sources of income and shelter. Thousands of migrant workers rushed to bus stations and sought ways to

return home at the earliest. 50 million migrant workers began risking their lives to reach home: trekking, walking on roads or railways tracks, cycling, getting on to cargo trucks and any available means of transports. This was undoubtedly the largest exodus of people the world had ever witnessed in its history.



India has 170 million workers who have migrated for work. 140 million lost their jobs in wake of the pandemic outbreak. The plight of the migrant workers walking thousands of kilometers to their homes carrying their children on the shoulders and their meagre possession on their back, braving heat and hunger will haunt us for many years.



Someone else travelling to Bihar was not quite so lucky. At Muzaffarpur Station, a little child was trying to wake up his mother; who seemed to be fast asleep on the railway platform. The truth is: She was dead.



We do not know how many so-called migrants died on their way home.



As 'India Today' website says, "Hundreds of migrant workers across India have died due to exhaustions, starvation, heatstroke, road accidents, among others, as they desperately try to reach their homes,

Indeed a mammoth task ahead! A journey of a thousand miles begins with a small steps. The pathways of the laborers do not pass through the national highways alone but through every alley that surrounds us. Our daily lives are full of laborers – cooks, peons, gardeners, sanitary workers, construction laborers, coolies, vegetable vendors, farmhands, drivers and watchmen – without whom we would be paralyzed.

The Pandemic has brought us a grace of penitence with regard to our attitude towards laborers, and a renewed sense of commitment to social justice for them.



IMPACT OF COVID – 19 On PREM DAN MUMBAI

As of now in Mumbai city and suburban areas, there are 1.48M reported cases of COVID 19 and 64,349 deaths. Life has changed drastically for people especially in the slums because many people have lost their jobs. Schools came to sudden halt on March 15th with no exams and a closure of all activities. From then on it has been most difficult for the poor people huddled together in one small room. While some IT and office people could work from home this was not possible for domestic workers and daily wage laborers who were not allowed to go to work for fear that they may be carriers. With the lockdowns the whole family had to remain at home even if they were huddled in one room because of which domestic violence increased in the home and children were restless and irritable as they had no space to play or do anything.



Holy Name High School

Garden School

without the children

ACTIVITIES DURING THE LOCKDOWN

At the Garden School in Colaba dry ration and other items like toilet requisites, masks, sanitizers were distributed to some of the families of the sponsored children, teachers, construction workers and also other poor families of the vicinity who would be affected by the lockdown restrictions.



In Reay Road Slum, people were not allowed to go out except to use the public toilets. The houses of the people are in bad condition with no one allowed to do repair work. There was strong police security and if people ventured out of their houses they were badly beaten.



If people fall sick it is very difficult as the hospitals are full of all kinds of patients and they do not cater to the poor. Perm Dan as well as some other NGO's distributed rations and cooked food to the people in the Reay Road slums.

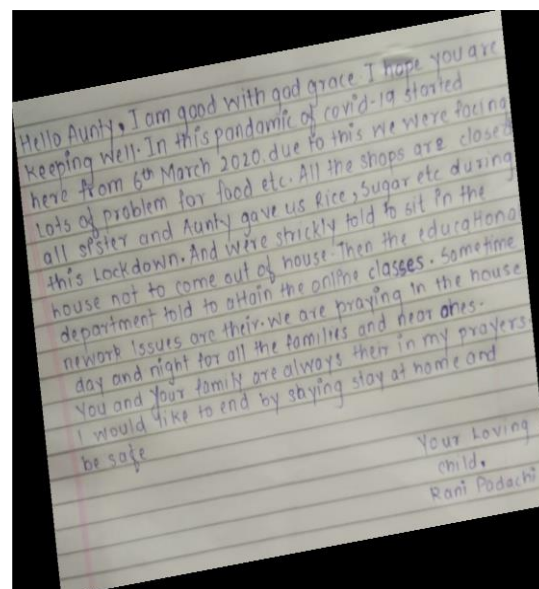
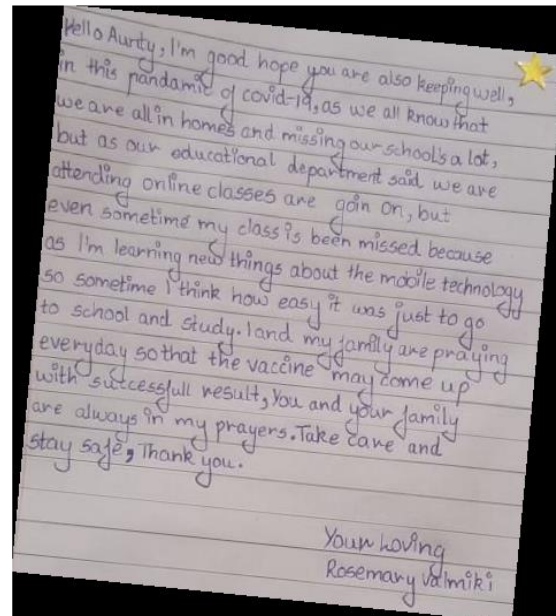
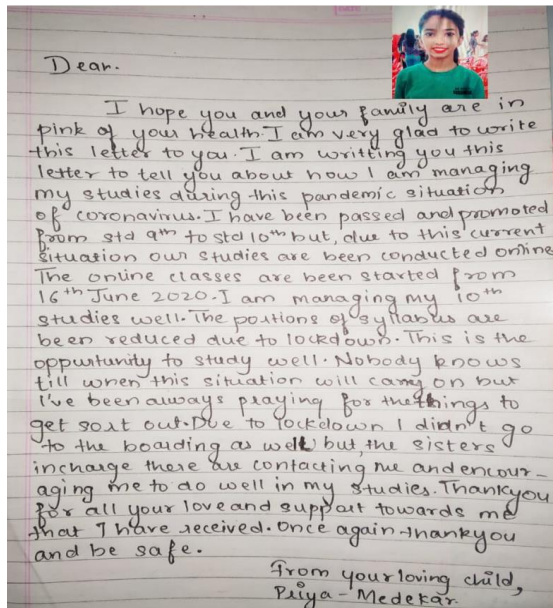


In Geeta Nagar slum The situation is almost the same. People are unable to manage because they have lost their jobs. They do not have money to buy the essential things. They have to borrow money to pay their bills. Their houses are in a bad condition and when it rains water comes into the houses. During the high tide, sea water enters the houses. They are taking precautions and washing their hands but they are unable to buy sanitizers and other things. Prem Dan distributed food items and cooked meals to the families.



Garden school has not yet opened but the Premdan children who are in different schools have to attend the online teaching program. For our children in the slums it is very difficult as some families can have only one smart phone and 3 or 4 children have to use it for their classes. Since most of the parents in the slums are uneducated they are unable to help their children. Sometimes they have to manage everything in one room – cooking, cutting vegetables, studying and so on. Some of the children had gone back to their villages so they have to try to follow the studies from there online. The teachers are taking care of things for their families

In the Boarding at Kharghar the children had to be sent home because of social distancing norms and so they too are struggling in their homes. We hope and pray that things will get better and our children can come back to the boarding and attend physically. Some of them have expressed their difficulties in their letters.



The COVID -19 pandemic has had a major impact on education – both negative and positive.

Globally online education has met with some success. In the case of India, we still have a long way to go before digital learning is seen as mainstream education, because students living in urban areas have the facilities to opt for digital education, however in rural areas all the students do not have required infrastructure nor are financially strong to avail the resources required for digital learning.



However, Prem Dan have provided some Tabs for the students who cannot afford to purchase one. These students come to the Garden School, and attend their online classes. One of the staff members supervises their studies daily.



Sr. Asha Ohol conducted a small camp at the Garden School, for the people of the vicinity showing them how to prepare the Sanitizer and the Masks. This was much appreciated by the participants.



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HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS TO

Our Prem Dan Boarders at Kharghar :- Passed Grade XII Succesfully.



Priyanka Sharma 71%



Kaitlyn D'Cruz 69.20%

Our Prem Dan Boarders at Kharghar :- Passed Grade X Succesfully.



**Rinky Gupta
80.20%**



**Margaret S.
75.80%**



**Nirmala Rathod
69.20%**



**Neha Naikar
60%**

Our Prem Dan Garden School :- Passed Grade X Succesfully.

30 appeared for S.S.C Exams 2019 -2020 – All Passed

Among the 30 students, 2 of them obtained high mark :



Pranav Badar 84.20%



Kavita Pawar 82.40%

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS TO SR. FELICITY MORRIS
The Founder member of Prem Dan Trust



On the 65th Anniversary of her Religious Life and 42 Years in Prem Dan. We thank God for Sr. Felicity for reaching out to so many poor children and the families. May God Bless you Dear Sr. Felicity.



FAREWELL AND WELCOME



Our sincerely thanks to Sr. Sylvia Mascarenhas RJM for her three years of dedicated service to Prem Dan. We thank God for Sr. Sylvia, who served the poor with such love, care and cheerfulness. Sr. left us w.e.f. 15th June 2020 for Pune who has been entrusted with the responsibility of Provincial Bursar. We wish God's blessings in her new ministry



We welcomed Sr. Helen Dias RJM to Garden school on 16th June 2020 and wish God's blessings as she takes up the new challenge to work with underprivileged.

Sad Demise

Sr. Zelia Fernandes who worked in PremDan for six years passed away on 3rd January 2020 in Pune.



Sue Snelson our sponsor and one of the staff members of Aquinas College – England - passed away on 26th July 2020.



May the Lord grant them eternal peace and happiness in His Kingdom.



PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONA VIRUS

Almighty and merciful God, who show your love all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayer we make for all those affected by the Corona Virus in various parts of the world.

We come before you asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people.

We make this prayer to You O God. Amen.





A big THANK YOU

To all our SPONSORS,DONORS and
BENEFACTORS FOR BEING A BURNING FLAME for
Premdan. We deeply appreciate the
unconditional support and love shown day-in
and out through donations, feeding programme,
clothes , medical aid , books for our children and
for maintenance and repairs of the buildings.
May God Bless You and Your Families.

With much love,Grattiude and Blessings,

Sr. Felicity Morris, Sr. Helen Dias, Sr. Asha Ohol rjm. and all at Prem Dan.