

Child Haven International



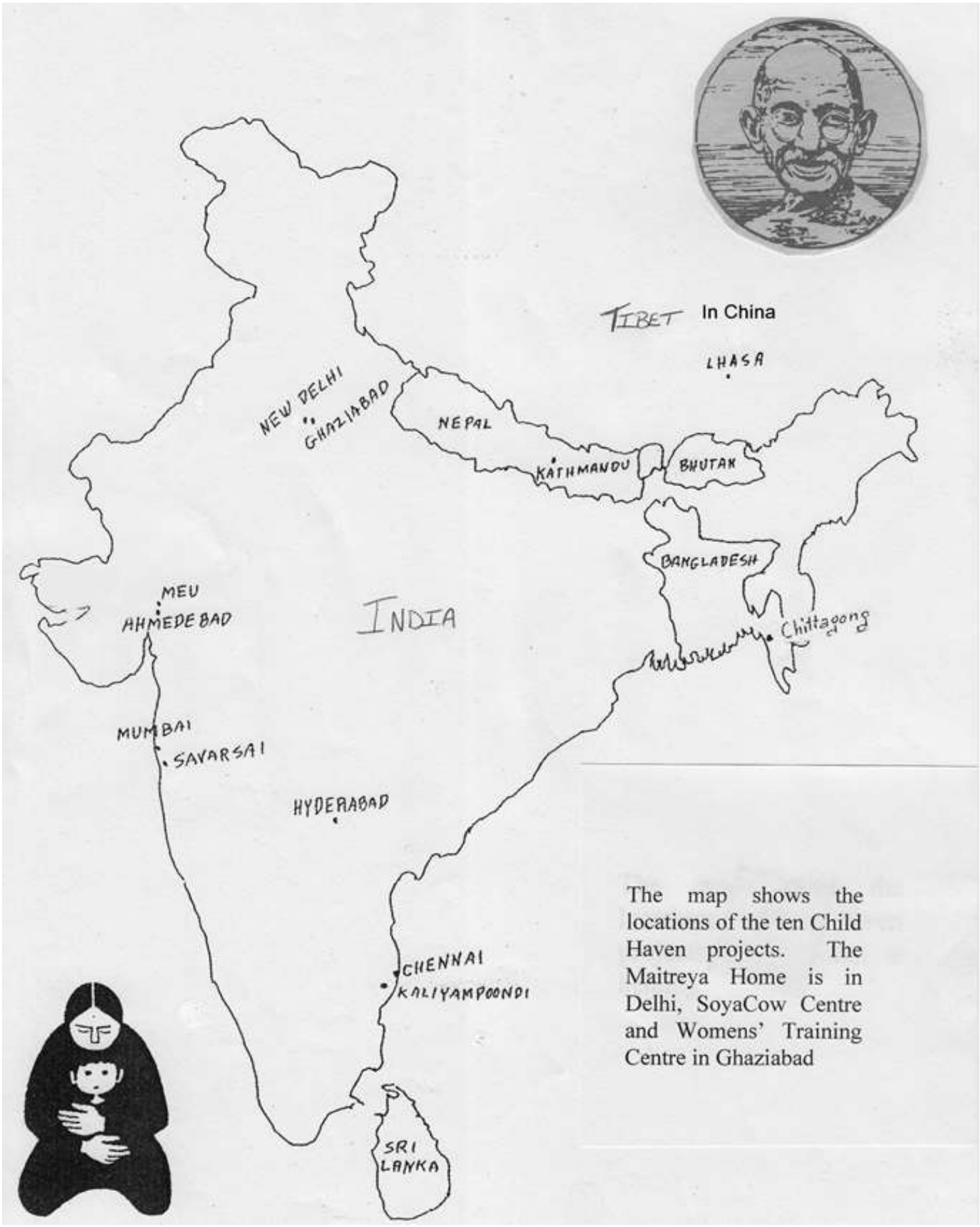
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December 2016



Kaliyampoondi - Fifth Graders Asin, Gomathi, Logeshwari and Abinaya playing Carom, a very popular game at all our Homes.

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Nepal	10-11, 23-24	Hyderabad	18-19		



The map shows the locations of the ten Child Haven projects. The Maitreya Home is in Delhi, SoyaCow Centre and Womens' Training Centre in Ghaziabad

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Savarsai – Sonali practices her Marathi penmanship during study time at the Home.

Child Haven Homes

Meu (Gandhinagar), Gujarat, India 68 children 8 women, Language: Gujarati
Hyderabad, Telangana, India 183 children 14 women, Language: Telugu
Kaliyampoondi, Tamil Nadu, India 325 children 35 women, Language: Tamil
Maitreya Foundation, New Delhi, India 24 children 1 woman, Language: Tibetan & Hindi
Savarsai, Maharashtra, India 48 children 4 women, Language: Marathi
Tribal Home, City of Pen, near Savarsai Home, 55 children, Marathi plus tribal languages
Kathmandu, Nepal, 203 children 22 women, Language: Nepali
Tibet in China, sponsoring 14 children 4 women, Language: Tibetan
Chittagong, Bangladesh, 70 children 15 women, Language: Bengali
Ghaziabad Women's Centre, Uttar Pradesh, India; education in tailoring for 50 women at a time; inexpensive sanitary napkin production and sale; Beauty and Wellness Course, Language: Hindi

(Many other children are sponsored for education, but are not living in one of our Homes.)



Savarsai - The jackfruit trees at the Home produced a huge crop this year. After Nilesh, Dhananjay, Shubham and our gardener Ashok (left to right) cut and break-up the massive fruits, the children (bottom) devour them.

Immediately below, a pair of jackfruit growing on a tree. They are about the size of a football!





Savarsai - To the right, Aditya and Paras exercise their wits and strategy during a game of chess in front of the neem and mango trees

Below left, Yvette, the iguana keeps a close watch from the garden wall.

Below right, Barsa and Hindvi have very important places to go and things to do!









Bangladesh – Above, Nokia, left, and Tonusri hang laundry on the roof of our Children's Home.

Below, Faruqe, right, helping the Grade Three students with their studies. Faruqe, who came to the Home at the age of 5, is now studying power technology in a post-secondary program.





Bangladesh – As is the case in all our Homes, when a child needs to spend time in the hospital, the hospital expects a family member to come and stay with them to provide care. For us that means a staff member or volunteer-intern will go and perform those duties. Above, Sumon, age 17, on a recent stay in the hospital with the Home's Matron, Sokena, who stayed there with him.

Below, it's rehearsal time for the bamboo dance, a favorite at the Home.



Bonnie Lore by Fred Cappuccino, her long-suffering husband.



I was quite pleased with myself. Every Christmas I would wait until Christmas Eve to buy a tree after the price came down. But one year, when I went to the tree place, they were sold out! I went to all the tree places – same story. Woe is me! I dreaded going home and telling Bonnie the news. She would berate me for my short-sighted stupidity, and say, "Ha, ha." Fortunately, she did laugh but also had an inspiration; "how about decorating my mother's rocking chair?" So that's what we did.



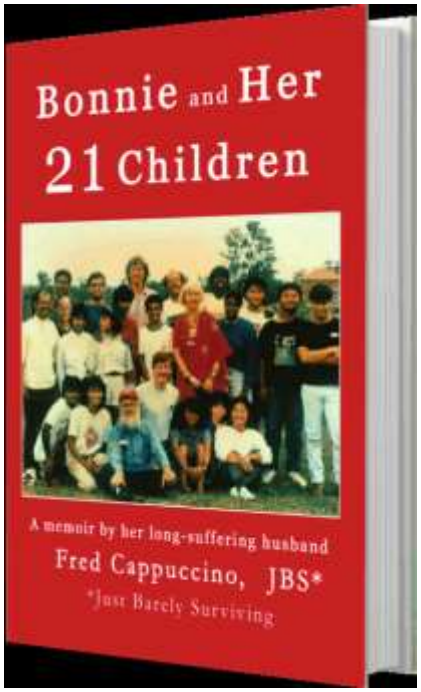
Our son Robin, age two, helped decorate the "rocking tree." Bonnie let him squirt artificial snow. The white stuff was hard to clean off, and reminded Bonnie of her husband's folly for years to come. Chastened, the next year I bought a tree well before Christmas.

When we moved to our present 100 acres near Maxville, ON, our kids used to cut a huge tree each year, usually trimming the top so it would fit without pushing too hard on the ceiling.

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Nepal – One thing Volunteer Interns sometimes do is take groups of children on walks or field-trips. Above, Liisa Risanen took this picture of some boys she took on a sketching field-trip to the woods north of the Home.

Below are some children that Adriane Armour took to visit the giant prayer wheel at the Kopan Monastery not far from our Home. Says Adriane, "the idea is to spin the prayer wheel around and release the prayers. The faster you go the more prayers are released. It's a joyful experience."









Nepal – The Montessori Program at our Green Tara Child Haven School was begun in 2009. Child Haven is devoted to providing the best educational opportunities possible, while stressing the Gandhian principles of equality, non-violence, self-reliance, simple living, and respect for each individual's culture and beliefs. We now have two fully functioning bi-lingual Montessori environments, each operating according to AMI principles with 35 children between the ages of 3 and 6.

Left, teacher Bhuwana works with one of her students.

Here are some selections from the Weekly Reports of Volunteer-Intern Nanci Burns from Ottawa who is spending three months at our Kathmandu Home

I Thought it was a Simple Idea – October 27th

After I discovered this beautiful rec centre "Sherpa Party Palace" walking distance from Child Haven (4 km) that had a 50 metre pool and a smaller wading pool for younger kids, I suggested to the CH supervisor we take the children swimming. The days are still very warm in October and the pool is quiet. The water appears to be comparable to that of a Canadian lake. "Sure" says Roshan, the CH boy's supervisor.

I – being a true Canadian – check the weather forecast and see that it will be 26 degrees and sunny 3 days for the next few days. That gives me time to find out who wants to go and who will help out. Three days is usually a long term plan for me and I felt proud that I resisted my initial instinct to head out the next day.

First the "sign up". Who wants to go? 49 children instantly ask to go – repeatedly. I discover 48 children do not have "bathing costumes". I plan to rent them at the pool but hygiene is raised and another volunteer agrees to buy suits for all, if I pay admission fees. This offer snowballs. It becomes a day long shopping event into the bowels of Kathmandu warehouse district. It is an hour and half by taxi each way. Did I mention shopping and driving are my least favourite activities on a beautiful day? I adopt a zen pose. In the end, due to space, only one child is allowed to join us to help select and barter the bathing costumes. That did not work well. She had the stomach flu going and coming (details omitted).

At this point, I was cursing my impulsivity, however, we now had the bathing costumes for 25 kids ages 9-13. I was feeling very nervous about supervising younger children, given the 4 km distance each way to the pool, and the lack of supervision at the pool. I recruited several older children to come as supervisors but I was still faced with the fact no children can swim.

The anticipation, tears and constant reassurance "Please swim me, Nanci Didi" *(didi means "sister in Nepali*) with frantic swimming motions to accompany the request was asked over and over for 2 days. One girl cried inconsolably and I allowed OK, one 8-year-old can come.

One last logistic. Supervision. I was assured there would be a lifeguard. But there are 2 pools! One adult joined me, given my repeated mantra "I am concerned about safety". I approach several older children to join me to help. I promise more photography lessons and the opportunity to use my Nikon camera. Three agreed. This creative moment resulted in way better pictures than any I would have been able to take. It also meant they would not be asking to swim.



I took the girls up to their space and unveiled the new bathing costumes, which were awash with beautiful colours: blues, pinks and reds. What a hit and magically they all fit and everyone got the colour they wanted.

Now ready for the main event. The road there is a mess and awash with trucks, cars, motorcycles, bicycles transporting a range of materials that limit the visibility of the

driver and widen their path. Then there is the dust. Often I need to grab children and pull them off the road to keep them safe and repeat to myself time and again "This is CRAZY!" Finally, 9 year old Christina asks me, "Nanci Didi, What is crazy?" I reply "it is my frustration that these drivers do not slow down for children and I am afraid one of you may get hurt."

Finally, we arrive and the joy is overwhelming. Like childbirth, you forget the previous pain in getting here and embrace the miracle that this moment brings. I look around for the designated life guard I was assured and see a teenage boy off in the distance half asleep. I ask him if he knows if there is a lifeguard. The boy turns around and is wearing a t-shirt that says "Shut Up Bitch". I am appalled but say nothing as he nods and confirms he is the lifeguard. I am tempted to throw him into the pool to see if he can swim but instead I mobilize my own posse. Did I mention 23/25 children cannot swim at all? The 2 children who can manage 4 strokes quickly become my lifeguards. I join the children in the water and organize lessons where we practice to relax in the water, blow bubbles and swim with my support. It all works without a glitch!

The next day, I am joined on my morning walk by several children from my swim trek, including Christina. At one point, a big bus rushes by us. Christina raises her arm and shouts "You are CRAZY!" She is delighted with herself that she has a new English phrase.

I am now wondering if perhaps Saturday may be warm enough to swim again. After all, how much more complicated can it get?

I Cried Today – November 1st

It's the last day of Tikar, a 5 day Hindu festival, that honours the crow, the dog, the cow and the ox. Today siblings are honoured. Don't ask me to explain the logic. However, what better place to see a sibling ceremony but in a home of 100 plus children. I had no idea what to expect, however, the floor paintings, lights, candles, food preparation and new clothing were all indications this would be a special day. At noon, the mats were rolled out and the boys took a seat. The girls lined up and paraded around the boys 3x (everything is always 3x). Then the recognition of each boy began. The first "sister" in line put oil in his hair. The next "sister" combed his hair. The 3rd sister put flower pedals on his head. The next sister put a wreath of strung flowers around his neck. Then, the next 5 sisters, each with a dish of different colour paints, put a tika on their forehead. Then, each sister stood in front of each boy and the boy bowed to her. Following me so far?



Then it was the girls turn, and the boys lovingly put colourful tikas on all their sisters foreheads. I hope the pictures tell the story better but it was very moving ceremony and I was teary throughout. If anyone questioned whether attachment takes place, they should definitely visit on sibling day. Such caring and love between siblings who have no parents, can see how they have created their own caring environment that is inclusive, caring and non-judgmental. Its amazing to witness. I wish I could package this and send it to you!

Photos and Report by Nanci Burns



Kaliyampoondi - Volunteer-Intern Rebecca Lewis (center) with some of the members of her parasol club. Rebecca spent three months at the Home this past winter. *Photo by Seenu*

Overseas Interns Needed:

We have space for more volunteers who will pay their own travel and commit three to six months interning in India, Nepal, or Bangladesh. Please contact our office in Maxville 613-527-2829. A $50 fee covers processing costs and your attendance at a two-day Orientation in Maxville. An additional $200 donation to partially cover overseas room and board is also asked of Interns. You can check out our new Intern Brochure on our web-site www.childhaven.ca

Volunteer-interns supplement the loving care provided by our dedicated staff. Typically they spend time helping in the kitchen, tutoring the children, helping with homework, help with English skills, and a plethora of other activities depending on their special interests and skills.

Child Haven does not:

1. *Sell or trade your name/address;*
2. *Solicit by phone or door to door;*
3. *Use professional fund raisers or advertising, except for small ads announcing local events*



Maitreya Home - Bonniema and Dhakpa Rhinpoche with Tenzing Seoek, the most beautiful baby in the world, daughter of Home Supervisor Karma and his wife, Dechen Dolkar.



Nyima Lhamo (left) is 20 years old. She was 7 when she came to the Home from Tezu, a camp for Tibetan refugees in Arunachal Pradesh. Her grandfather escaped from Tibet, and her mother was born at the camp. She has no father. Her mother heard about the Home and as she was unable to support her, sent her to the Home. She is enrolled in a Bachelor's degree in Political Science with Honors. Her favorite course so far has been *Reading Gandhi*. She says "I am impressed that he did lots of struggle for Indian Independence, like the salt march movement, which made me interested in fighting peacefully for Tibetan Independence as His Holiness the Dalai Lama, recommends". She has also taken a travel and tourism course, and would like to go into airport management, something she has been interested in for the past 4 or 5 years. She enjoys her studies and plans to work in the airport in Delhi where she can meet Bonniema four times a year when she passes through the airport.



Kaliyampoondi - Above, left to right, cooks Indhra, Jothi, Sasikala, Latha, Bharathy and Kuttiyamal de-stem amaranth leaves for 300 eaters at the Home.

Below, the 4th and 5th Grade girls take part in a frog race in front of the girl's dorm. (photos by Beth)





Kaliyampoondi - Jothy, (center above) is one of the cooks in the Home's kitchen. She first came to work 9 years ago. Jothy heard about the Home from a yoga teacher after her husband left her with three young children. She is now the Head Cook. Her day starts at 4 A. M., making breakfast for the college kids, (she takes a nap in the afternoon from 1 to 3). She is pleased that her children, who came with her to the Home are doing well. They are, left to right above, Ramia, age 12, Rachita, age 9, and Vishnu, 13 years old. She likes working for Child Haven she says "because when I needed help I got it, so now I keep on helping". Being with so many children is her favorite part of her job.

Below, Jothy and cook Bharti spread mangos in the sun each day for a week before making them into pickles. They will add salt, chili powder, mustard seeds and peanut oil. The pickles will keep for up to a year.





Hyderabad – Here is a photo of our All-India Board of Directors taken at their meeting in August. From left to right are, long-time Board Member Ramchandra Sangle, who runs a major furniture import and sales company in Hyderabad; R. K. Gupta, another long-time Board Member, who operates a food wholesale business; K Ilangovan, current Board Chair, who is a Gandhian scholar and a retired state auditor now working for a university in Chennai; Raj Anthony, current Board Secretary, who is a long-time activist on behalf of India's tribal communities and founder with his wife Vaishali of the Ankur Trust whose Tribal Children's Home Child Haven supports; B. N. Vaishnab a retired electrical engineer and lawyer who worked for the Government of Gujarat; Archana Balasubramaniam, long-time friend and social worker; Sadhana M. Kolhatkar, who with her late husband Mukhund, a Gandhian and Goa freedom fighter, helped found our Children's Home in Savarsai; and Veda Kumari, a retired top administrator in an Agricultural University. Not present for the photo were Dr. Chittanya, a medical doctor from Gandhinagar who has led free medical camps all across India, K. M. Bal Kishan Agarwal, a Hyderabad business-man, and Nirmala J. Naik, a retired teacher.

Together, the Board offers invaluable guidance and support to our Children's Homes on everything from financial transparency and accountability and meeting Indian national and local governmental requirements, to Gandhian practices and cultural appropriateness. We are very fortunate to have their ongoing counsel and support!

Photo by Beth Keogan





Hyderabad - Janaki, above, top of photo, is the Book-keeper of our Home in Meu. She and our other Indian Home book-keepers came together in Hyderabad this summer for a training in the accounting methods required in all Child Haven Homes. Janaki made some new friends who hope she will come again.

Samreen, left, is studying in the Tenth grade and has been living at the Home for the past seven years. Her younger sister Yasmeen is also at the Home and studying in the Ninth Grade.

Photos by Beth Keogan





Meu – Above left, Pooja, age 7, shows off her pink kool-aid dyed tongue. She and her older sister Maya came to the home after their mother passed away. To the right above, four of the boys demonstrate their collaborative head-stand prowess to volunteer-intern Simone Emery, who took these photos.

Below, Vishal and Jignesh hold Maha (care-giver Bhavanaben's most beautiful baby in the world) up to see over the balcony wall. They're both quite talented chess players.





Tribal Home - The children gather to watch and take part in a special performance.

A group of older girls sing a song for Bonniema and guests
Beth Keogan photos





Tibet in China - Tsetan Dolkar (above) is in Grade 12 and living with her Aunt in Lhasa.

Below, Tenzin, (left) is in Grade 4 and Tenzin Dolkar, (right) is in Grade 11. They are also now staying in Lhasa. Child Haven supports their living expenses and schooling along with 11 other formerly destitute children.







Nepal - Shuv Bhumi, age 11, lights a candle as part of the Home's New Year's celebration and memorial for the victims of last year's earthquake

Let me light my light, says the star,
And never debate if it will dispel the dark
Rabindranath Tagore





Nepal and Bangladesh Caregivers Mina Karki at our Kathmandu Home (left) and Halima (right) at our Home in Chittagong giving bucket showers to some of their flock. When water is scarce, it helps to dole out water by the pitcher full.

For donations please make cheque out to CHILD HAVEN, and mail this portion to CHILD HAVEN, 19014 Conc. 7, Maxville, ON K0C 1T0 (or to Box 5099, Massena, NY 13662-5099, USA.) Donations to Child Haven are tax receiptable in Canada, India and the USA. General Full sponsorship is $30/month or $360/year. Half-sponsorship is $15/month or $180/year.

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