



FALL 2014 PROGRESS UPDATE

Remedial English classes

It has been roughly three years since we started classes for children in the Vanni area, who had been deprived of the opportunity to learn English for a host of reasons, availability being the primary one. The children are enrolled in our classes in the 7th Grade and continue until they appear for the GCE (OL) exam. A "C" grade or better on this exam opens the gates for higher education. Forty-two of the students who joined at the inception of our program are appearing for this exam in December. Interestingly, the majority are girls. I met with them in June of this year. They are extremely confident in their ability to fare very well. Special coaching classes are being conducted to ensure success.



Some of the children who will take the exam this year

We now have a total of twenty one classes with over 1000 students enrolled. Several students are no longer officially part of the program due to chronic absenteeism, as this impedes the progress of the others. These students demonstrate their willingness to learn as they will join the group when they are able and sit at the back of the class, learning and absorbing what they can. The social circumstances that hinder their ability to make it to class regularly are a larger problem which needs to be addressed.

Computer Labs

The computer lab we established last year at Tharanikulam Ganesha Vidyalayam is functioning well. The IT teacher was transferred out and not replaced. The principal has recruited a volunteer who is performing well. We hope that he will be made permanent and have offered him a modest stipend until this happens.

Our Canadian donors collected about two dozen additional refurbished computers. With the help of Digital Chemicals, owned by ex-pat Ravi Gukathasan, we have shipped them to Colombo. They has been received by Major General Ravi Ratnasingham and we will present them to Panrikkeithakulam GTM School and Mathar Panikkar Mahilan Kulam GTM School on my next visit this November.

If you have a serviceable computer you wish to donate, preferably a laptop, please contact Mr. Senthivel (contact info below).

Water Purifier for Tharanikulam Ganesha Vidyalayam

During my last visit in June, Principal Pavendran told me that many of the students were afflicted with kidney problems due to the water quality. We shopped around on the Principal's three wheeler and purchased a water purifier. This was inaugurated by Yogi Rajasingham, his mother and Mrs. Neela Senthivel, who were there to visit the schools.



*Inauguration of Water Purifier
Mrs. Neela Senthivel, Yogi Rajasingham and his
mother, Principal Pavendran in back ground*

Gnanam Study Centre



*Inauguration of the Gnanam Study Centre
(Father Peter in foreground)*

Father Peter Amalraj is a Catholic priest who has established a program to teach spoken English to both children and adults. He needed a classroom as there was no space to hold the classes. With contributions from a Canadian donor we built a classroom. This program is progressing well. We have also utilized this program to train some of the ladies who are in a parallel project, making Nuno scarves.

Every visit reinforces my belief that progress is possible and is being made.

Thank you for your past support. We hope that you will continue to contribute generously, as you have done before. Contributions may be sent by check to the address below, or by logging on to www.vanniaid.net.

With sincere gratitude,

Josephine & Wiji Ratnathicam

16 Amalfi Drive, Cortlandt Manor, New York 10567

Home (914) 737-1358; Mobile (914) 424-6097 (USA)

Email wijirat@gmail.com

Vanni Aid is a (501(c)(3)) charitable organization based in New York. All donations are tax deductible.

Canadian Contact: S. Senthivel

Home (905) 201-6229; Mobile (416) 707-1236

To contribute in Rupees:

W.S. Ratnathicam

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