

NEWS REPORTS TO FRIENDS & SUPPORTERS

July 25th

The good news from Darjeeling is that the trustees of the Girls' Orphanage have taken the first step in approving the first floor of the orphanage building for use as sleeping accommodation by the girls. At present their sleeping quarters are extremely cramped without good ventilation. We are now waiting to see if this move is approved by the Head Lama, who is based in Delhi.

Poonam, a community health worker who has worked with the girls at the orphanage previously, will be contacting Pema Bhante (the monk in charge) in the near future to discuss timing of a new round of visits to the girls which will be paid for by the Trust. There was some delay to the original timing of this plan because of the difficulties caused by strikes in Darjeeling but these have now been resolved. The plan is for her to work with the girls for two days a week for two months to help with their health regimes etc. Hopefully, this will start within the new couple of weeks.

Vivek, the engineer with whom the Trust works, is now back in Darjeeling and has arranged for the purchase of the materials for the repair of the roof to Buddhist Primary school to stop ingress of water down walls and through the roof. The materials are arriving today - Friday - from Siliguri (down on the plains) and work will hopefully start over the weekend. It should take two days. Once this is done to the satisfaction of Major Wangdi (one of our trustees), he and Vivek will move their attention to the proposed concreting of the trench at Toong Soong school, which should also help reduce wetness inside the school building.

The Major has also visited some of the schools which are involved in the travelling library project and, when he went to Agam Singh school Sabita, our librarian/storyteller was there telling stories to the children who seemed to be enjoying it greatly - the project is in action! Money donated by the Trust is being used at the Hope School for Special Needs Children to help provide milk, biscuits and stationery. The school is having great difficulty in raising funds to keep going but offers support and education to over 200 children, only some of whom are able to attend the school whilst others are visited by staff at home.