



Piali Ashar Alo

Piali Ashar Alo School

September - December 2021

This is our last report for this year. Unfortunately, we have to write to you that schools here, except for older students (from the ninth grade onwards), have not yet opened.

After more than 600 days without school lessons, it is difficult to imagine the consequences. Despite the fact that schools also organize distance learning, it is estimated that 60% of students do not have access to a computer or smart phone. Every day when the schools are closed, it represents a double learning loss for the children. Many girls, teenagers, got married, young boys went to work. The media portrays teachers visiting homes, as many high school students did not return even after the opening of the higher classes. We also "lost" quite a few children because they moved during the pandemic. Two of our girls got married. Thoughtfully and systematically, the government has reopened the country for adults, but they do not seem to have done so for our children - despite the



fact that education is a fundamental right in India as well.

How do we navigate these times? The big advantage is that the pandemic did not spread in our village (or it was not detected due to mild symptoms). In September, train transport was reopened, meaning many parents went back to work on overcrowded trains to the city.

However, this did not increase the number of cases of corona infections. The teachers were thus able to start coming to school on a regular basis by train, which meant that we rolled up our sleeves and tried to make up for the lost time. And of course we remained careful that we took all protective measures. This time we focused mainly on younger children, with whom we were in less contact throughout the year. So we organized both learning



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and creative workshops in small groups.

Some important highlights:

1. A very special day in India is celebrated on September 5, the **Teachers' Day**. On this day, the



students make an effort to prepare a really special celebration for their teachers, from cultural points to small gifts and a delicious lunch. This seems to me to be one of the most beautiful holidays here, as I think that few missions are as important and demanding as the mission of our teachers. It is right that we remember them at least on this occasion.

2. A really interesting and current **workshop** was organized for us by *ThinkArts*. The topic of the workshop was the role of gender in our families and in our community. We talked about what the role of our parents is and what specific tasks they do at home. Almost all the girls said that their fathers cook less, but more deliciously ☺. In general, the girls said that mothers are the



ones who carry heavier burdens and that they want to change that when they start their own families. Bravely forward!

3. We organized the **Christmas program** on December 21, and we will have a picnic right on Christmas. We staged a Christmas story, sang and danced to Christmas carols. We gifted all the children and there was no shortage of holiday goodies. This time we baked a Christmas cake and biscuits all by ourselves. We set up stalls for guests with Christmas delicacies with an Indian touch. More photos can be found at the following link:



<http://www.pialiasharalo.org/marry-christmas-and-a-happy-new-year/?lang=en>



4. The very good news is that we have started **expansion of our upper floor**. Special thanks to the German organization *CED - Stiftung, Christlicher Entwicklungsdienst*, which sponsors the expansion of our premises. The new premises will be used for additional classrooms, indoor games, a school science laboratory, toilets, bathrooms and a living area.



A sincere thank you to all of you who also stood by our side in 2021. Thank you CED and the Luc Upanja Humanitarian Society, thank you Second Vivekananda Bridge, thank you to all our Godparents and Volunteers. Thanks to all our Friends. We wish You a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours Piali Ashar Ato Family



www.pialiasharalo.org