



# NIRBAN MATH TRUST

## NEWSLETTER – October 2020

### KOR CHI

#### **HAPPY PUJAS from Golders Green.**

Hope everyone is safe and well.

This has been an important year for the Math, and it has been wonderful to see increased energy and engagement from family members. As many of you are already aware, a number of new ideas have been proposed regarding the governance and work of the Math and it is very much hoped that this momentum will continue. On the other end of the spectrum, local restrictions resulting from Covid-19 have raised challenges to the Math's work. Nevertheless, it has been gratifying to see how family members have stepped up to support the Math's local community during this difficult time and there is plenty of work that the Math can continue to do. **Thakuma's birthday celebrations (Utsab) was held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020.** On this occasion, there were some family members from the USA to give it a special flavour. The visitors included Anjana (Anju), Surajit (Sunu) & Jayati. From Kolkata, we had Nandita, Rahul (Bhuttu) and ever present Kutti accompanied by Tarun.

It would be wonderful if others took the opportunity to grace the occasion next March, always assuming Covid has been neutralized.

Earlier in the year, **Saraswathi Puja** was celebrated with the usual gusto of the children of Balkendra, but it was just before the school had to shut down due to government restrictions. Independence Day this year was a low-key affair and limited to hosting the flag

only. It was attended by Subrata, our staff and teachers.

#### **“Brahmajna Ma” Balkendra – Established 2002**

The school is now shut down due to Covid-19. Education nevertheless remains an important part of the Math's work and there are plans to reopen the school in accordance with government guidelines at the appropriate time. In the meantime, we are working on how best to progress the educational activities of the Math.

In February, Subrata Roy, our Deoghar Trustee, introduced to us a local volunteer organization – Inner Wheel. They are involved in numerous activities related to childrens' education. A team of 7 – 8 people of theirs visited the Math and have in principle agreed to get involved in the supervision and general running of Balkendra. Subsequently, during the Utsav, they also met with two of our family's Montessori Directresses (Anju and Jayati). As a result, we all have a better understanding of the needs of the local community and a way forward.

A sub-committee has been formed to oversee the running of Balkendra. It is being headed by Anju and assisted by Ratna, Nandita and Devina. Work has started and Anjana has already presented a Vision statement and a comprehensive Operations Guide to the Trustees. It will be distributed to all shortly.

#### **Computer Classes**

These too had to be shut down due to Covid. Anjana has agreed to include the Computer classes into the Balkendra framework. The

basic objective is to impart critical life skills to these children.

### **Tailoring Classes**

We have received a donation to purchase up to 10 machines and some fabric, with a view to setting up classes for some of the local women. This too would come under the purview of Balkendra. The Trustees have agreed that it would be prudent to invite one of the local organisations like Inner Wheel or Needs to supervise the running of the classes.

### **Purulia**

We have been successful in stopping further encroachment into our property. Our lawyers from Kolkata are guiding our solicitor in Purulia

We now have a High Court Order directing the local constabulary to ensure that the Injunction is not interfered with.

A Commissioner of the Purulia District Court attended the premises and made notes of the damage and full extent of the trespass. The Commissioners Report has been filed at the Court and the Court has directed the presence of both parties to be present on the date of the next hearing on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at which time we are hoping to get a permanent injunction with instructions to the local constabulary and state officials to ensure it is enforced.

In the meantime, the Kolkata High Court has adjourned the hearing till 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov'20. Basically, the intention here is to reinforce the order of Purulia High court - the Commissioners report should help.

### **Covid 19**

One of the most rewarding activities done by the Math during this period of immense difficulty has been the distribution of food

packets to approximately 800 families. These include food packets distributed:

- to the families of our school children
- to families in the Purulia region on 2 occasions
- to families in Subrata Roy's local area
- to Ramakrishna Mission children
- to other local families via Inner Wheel

***All this was possible due to the generosity of our members spread round the globe.*** Since the hardship continues, we are planning to do another round of distribution in the near future. Likely cost will be about \$2500.

### **Growth of the Math**

Following an email earlier in the year to all from Anju about the administration of the Math, Gen Next has started to get involved in the activities and running of the Math.

With this, a new vigour has been injected and fresh ideas forthcoming to grow and sustain the Math. In particular:

- As mentioned above, in Feb' 20, the Math was introduced to the local chapter of a global volunteer association known as Inner Wheel. Inner Wheel has in principle agreed to provide supervision to ensure the smooth running of Balkendra. They also agreed in principle to support other charitable activities that the Math may wish to undertake. The next step will be to agree exactly what support/management supervision Inner Wheel will provide to the Math and the basis of this. Covid-19 has delayed this activity

but the Trustees are keen to progress it further.

- Anju, Deepon and Sunu have now been inducted into the Board of Trustees.
- Rahul (Bhuttu) will also be overseeing the repairs & building work, the first phase of which relates to the Balkendra. He will coordinate with Anju, Sunu and Subrata as required to expedite the work. The attached schedule lists the first phase of repairs / building work that are scheduled to be carried out.
- Avijit has become our financial internal auditor
- Rishi (Bhuttu's son), with the assistance of Sunu, has set up a new website. Even though still a work in progress, it now has the most comprehensive information on Thakuma and Nirban Math in one place. We hope you will all visit the website at your convenience: <https://ronitbiswas.wixsite.com/nirbanmath2020>.
- Rahul & Rita have arranged for all existing Thakuma's books in print to be digitally scanned and translated. All the scanned books can be seen through the website.
- In the interest of open communication between the Board and all devotees of Thakuma, we will start quarterly information exchange meetings using the Google Meet platform. The 1st quarterly meet is scheduled for Saturday, November 7 @9:30am Houston time. A meeting invite will be sent to all but in case such does not arrive, please put this meeting on your

calendar and you can use the following link for the meeting: <https://meet.google.com/zwn-qmgb-snt>

For those not familiar with Google Meet, it may help to make sure you have the app downloaded on your computer with sufficient time in hand.

Many others have raised their heads above the parquet and begun to help/guide/question the Math's management. This is an exciting time for the Math.

We thank all the members and well-wishers for their generous donations and support. We continue to seek your blessings, well wishes, feedback, suggestions and your donations. We further continue to ardently hope that more of you will soon find an opportunity to visit our Math when it is safe to do so.

Let us end with one saying of THAKUMA

“ The ways of increasing one's thirst for truth are – good thoughts, good talks, good actions and good company”

**Pictures taken during the 2020 Utsav:**





**Pictures of the Covid Food Relief Work:**





Rice @ 2 kgs  
Masurdaal - 1 kg  
Chera - 1 kg  
Potato - 1 kg  
M. oil - 400 gm  
Sugar - 1 kg  
Salt - 1 kg  
Soap - 1 Pc  
Biscuit - 4 pkts

### Immediate Repair List - Shanti Ashram:

Location	Noted Issue	Proposed Solution	Proposed Actions
School Rooms	Gets too hot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Add 2 fans each in Upstairs &amp; downstairs classrooms</li> <li>- Electrical wiring may need to be fixed for year round operation</li> <li>- add additional inverter if exiting one is not sufficient or generator whichever is more practical</li> </ul>	Bhuttu will talk to Amit about the wiring and other details and recommend appropriate remedial steps
	35 benches & desks to be repaired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Replacement of lamination on student Tables</li> <li>b. New benches or replacement of Nuts, bolts, screws as needed. (Repairs should consider long term rather than short term/annual solutions)</li> </ul>	Bhuttu to discuss details with AC and then coordinate with Subrata/Amit to get quote and coordinate the work
Computer room	computers and printers not working	computers and printers to be repaired or replaced	Bhuttu/ to get appropriate quotes from vendors in Deoghar
clamps and locks of windows are broken in 1st flower class room	Need to replace total 22 nos locks of windows		Bhuttu to discuss with Amit,/Subrata get quotes and coordinate the work
School boundary wall	boundary wall is not Secured there is partially broken barbed wire in different sections	boundary wall is 700 feet need cover with Concertina Razor coils Stainless steel wire: Razor coils Stainless steel wire length -- 700 ft	Suggest this can be coordinated by Bhuttu/Subrata by local contractor



	needs coloring	Colouring For Boundary wall -- 11200.00 sqft	Suggest this can coordinated by Bhuttu/Subrata by local mistri
School Plaque on 2nd floor	mis-spelt name on plaque	make new plaque with correct spelling and install	Suggest this can coordinated by Bhuttu/Subrata by local mistri
Guard room (??)	Ceiling and floor of ground floor Guard room is so old, its plaster are coming of various places near about 40% of ceiling is damaged and floor is also 60% damaged	Flooring Repair, -- 9.545 cft3 Ceiling Plaster -- 57.50 sqft Colouring For Building -- 437.00 sqft	Suggest this can coordinated by Bhuttu/Subrata by local mistri
school store room	Back side portion of the school store room plasters are coming off from wall, 60% wall is damaged and the asbestos roof of store rooms are totally destroyed and need inner and outer plaster.	Plaster for walls -- 60.00 sqft Top asbestos sheet Replace -- 5.00 no's Flooring Repair, -- 13.36 cft3 Colouring For Building -- 829.50 sqft Painting for Doors & Windows -- 53.00 sqft	Suggest this can coordinated by Bhuttu/Subrata by local mistri
Grounds	Bricks from the ground to be removed and soil to be refurbished for gardening/plants	All vacant grounds to be utilized for plants & vegetables	Bhuttu will discuss with Subrata/Amit and coordinate the work
Existing wells	According to Rita Sen, one of the Shanti Ashram wells can/should be revived. May be this can be used in lieu of a new bore well proposed by NEEDS		Bhuttu will discuss with Subrata/Amit and coordinate the work