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The Children of Kanji

Newsletter November 2021

Dear friends,

This is the third version of our newsletter. The first one, written in the first days of November, was called FINALLY THE LIGHT. A few days later, it was THE DELUGE. Finally we have this one:

DAY BY DAY

The long-awaited governmental news reached the school management in mid-October. The administration authorized the reopening of schools and orphanages from the 1st November, after 19 months of closure.



It was a matter of putting everything in place after such a long interruption, despite the many uncertainties.

In fact, the reopening was a pre-start as the Diwali festival started on November 4th. It is the festival of lights, one of the most important in the Hindu world. It lasts several days. Of course, schools are closed for its entire duration.

The school therefore resumed on November 8, in "half gauge" in accordance with health standards.

The following days, the weather turned very bad. After several years of drought, rain poured over the region around the clock for two weeks, flooding crops and causing extensive damage to the most precarious homes. Schools were closed. The lakes, used as fish reserves, overflowed and turned the streets into rivers. Villagers fished the food cheaply from their doorsteps and shared it with their neighbors and families despite the difficulties of travel.

Finally, on November 22, the rain stopped allowing the school to reopen

The riverbed that runs through Kanji village is normally dry.



For the past 19 months you have been extraordinary: your loyalty and generosity has allowed us to face an un-precedent situation.

We have sent to the institution the sum of sixty thousand Euros which should make it possible to face the considerable stakes of the reopening of the school and the Shanti Lumin children's home.

The first step is to ensure that poverty does not prevent access to quality education. The school's enrollment has shrunk by 300 children to 1,300 students. This results from dropping out of school, families' move to big cities in search of a better future, and public school marketing efforts to attract students through free meals, uniforms and provision of tablets.

The drop in local revenues has been estimated to 50%. In the short term, it calls into question the immediate financial equilibrium of the institution. It should recover over time. Improvement of the economic situation and reduction of staff would help.

School transportation is the most important expense after salaries. Two of the six buses are no longer authorized to operate due to their obsolescence. They must be replaced. When the classes closed, four drivers found employment under much more favorable conditions. These posts remain vacant due to the low level of salary currently offered.

The pandemic has led to a significant increase in the price of basic goods. The recent bad weather will aggravate this situation. Teachers have remained loyal despite the huge pay gap with those offered in the public sector. A readjustment is necessary for reasons of loyalty and equity, despite the current financial situation of the school.

Shanti Lumin, the children's home, currently accommodates sixteen girls. The workforce will grow steadily to reach the previous workforce.

Your generosity allows the institution to weather the storm and keep its soul.

Be thanked

Pierre

Donations and sponsorships that reach us before the end of the year are subject to a tax deduction in 2022 for French taxpayers.

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