

# PREM DAN

Registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 BOM. 232/85 G.B.B. -SD dated 15.3.85 Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950, F 10310 (BOM) dated 29.4.85  
15, NATHALAL PAREKH MARG, MUMBAI- 400 001. TEL.: 284 1975 / 202 0474 FAX: 284 1975

5th December 97

Dear Friends,

We have come to the end of another year and we are on the threshold of the beginning of another Century. This is also the Golden Jubilee of India's Independence. Looking back I can say we have made progress in many ways, but the gap between the rich and the poor, is getting wider. Since my work is centered around the lives of the poorest in our country, I do feel a terrible frustration concerning the helpless fate of the millions living below the poverty line. There is however a ray of hope in Bombay. Today, besides Prem Dan, there are numerous organisations who have become aware of the needs of street children and the children of slum dwellers.

I know that some of you have expressed your disappointment in the academic success of your sponsored children. I do understand your feelings but I want you to know the gigantic task we face to cope with the inability on the part of their families to co-operate with the teachers. We have to motivate the parents to send the children to school regularly. The homework has to be done under the supervision of special teachers. Sometimes all of us dealing with them feel depressed but at the same time, we appreciate the efforts they put in, to help us to carry on with this gigantic task. We ask you to be patient and understanding if your child has not made progress. I also have to apologise to those of you who have had to cope with the change of the child you are sponsoring. This is another hopeless situation. The homeless feel nothing about changing their residence. We lose track of them suddenly and all the explanation we get is - they have gone back to their village.

In spite of all the problems, this programme has begun its 20th year and hundreds are benefitting from it. It's consoling to see so many going to college, and to meet young men and women transformed, who are now well employed - Thanks to your generosity.

In November, we had two Fresh Air Camps for 100 children.

You will be happy to know that a wonderful Italian Lady - Ms. Giovanna Berti who has special love for our homeless boys has managed to enroll them as members of the Y M C A. They are now enjoying skating, playing table tennis, badminton, basket ball etc..

On the 21st of November, we were delighted to welcome Prem Dan's Uncle J (Mr. Jurgen Feix of Germany) to Kharghar. He was very surprised to see our Dream Project. He hopes to be present for the opening ceremony.

The Fund Raising for the Boarding is still going on. We still need Rupees Twenty-Five Lakhs to complete this magnificent structure. We are deeply indebted to our Fairy God Mother, Havovi Medora, for her untiring efforts to raise funds. Single handed she has raised over 10 lakhs. Havovi - can Prem Dan ever thank you enough?

I would like to mention over here, the wonderful support we received from auditing magnets KPMG Peat Marwick. Mr. Medora, Mr. Iyengar and Mr. Swaminathan took time off from their busy schedule to encourage their boys and girls to do a freedom run which raised money for us. Thank you gentlemen for your kind support. To our dear German Friends Heinrich and Elisabeth Hunck and her sister - A Big Thank-you, for your generous donation to Prem Dan's Building Fund.

We are grateful to the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust and especially Mr. Russi Lala for donating a Telco Bus for new Boarding. Russi - Thanks and God Bless.

We are thankful to Bapsy Nariman of the Umang Charitable Trust for donating Rupees Five Lakhs towards the Building Fund. We are deeply grateful to Mrs. Scylla Vatcha for her two generous donations towards the Building Fund.

We cannot forget our ex-Grindlay friends now based in Melbourne - Thank you Julia, Jenny and Shirin, for all your efforts to raise money for Prem Dan, Kharghar. You must see this Home, to believe in Miracles of Love.

We hope to inaugurate the New Building in April 1998. We invite as many Sponsors to be with us on this memorable occasion. It's been my Dream for twenty years. I hope I live to see my children in this Beautiful Home.

Soon, our Reay Road School, will have a face lift. Thanks to the Rotary Club of the Queen's Necklace of Bombay. They have sponsored this School and will be starting Tailoring classes for the women, special tuition classes for the children and many other activities. If you know what the Rotarians can do, I assure you - I am going to enjoy working with them. Thank you, President Rizwan Hawa and your team for getting involved with Prem Dan.

Our dear Uncle Philippe Baudin has worked the miracle of registering Prem Dan France. In spite of his poor health, he made this dream of ours come true. Dear French Sponsors - kindly send your sponsorship from now on, to his address -

PREM DAN FRANCE  
C/O. PHILIPPE BAUDIN,  
BPO 1, 64260 Rebenacq  
Pyrenees Atlantiques, F R A N C E

Thank you Uncle Philippe for looking after Prem Dan France.

As we are approaching the beautiful feast of Christmas, I would like to share a few thoughts with you.

"THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND LIVED AMONG US"

This statement from the Gospel for Christmas day is simple and straightforward, but also very profound. These words capture the essence of the Christian message. In the Person of Jesus, God has become one of us. God is not distant and unapproachable. God has taken the initiative and approached us.

But - God did not come in power and majesty. God could have come as a Great King or a Mighty Warrior. But instead, God's presence is manifested as a newborn baby. What a paradox, that the one upon whom we all depend for our existence should become totally dependent upon Mary and Joseph for everything: food, protection and shelter. Could this little baby really be God Incarnate?

In the same way, the Lord of the Universe is not met by earthly rulers. Shepherds from the lowest levels of society, are the first who come to see the God child. They probably don't realise the full importance of who and what they see, but it is enough for them to praise God.

With the benefit of two thousand years of hindsight, we do know the fullness of what happened that day. God came among us, as one of us, in order to save us. Let us celebrate this "good news of great joy for all the people."

I wish each one of you a Very Happy Christmas. May Christ our Saviour reward you too for becoming Saviours to our children. May the year 1998 bring each one of you and your families all the graces and blessings, you so richly deserve.

Yours gratefully in Jesus and Mary

(SR. FELICITY MORRIS)