



**Meeting Bishu Nath**

Bishu Nath is one of MARG's children who is studying in Turn Bull High School, Darjeeling. He lost his father when he was very small and his mother started working as a maid to support his education. Due to the nature of his mother's work and the cold climate in Darjeeling, she got addicted to alcohol.

On Bishu's verification visit I got an opportunity to visit his house which is in Toung soong, Darjeeling. The charming young lad came to receive me at the police out post in Chowrasta. Running in front of me through the narrow lanes of the hill he guided me to his house. On reaching I saw the place where he was staying with his mother. A single room on rent approx 8' x 10' in size which was their kitchen, bed room and study room. I took a deep breath and wondered how they must be managing it. Though there was hardship this young lad had nothing to complain. He was ever smiling.

The previous day when I had met him at his school he told me that his mother was ill. This was the reason the house was empty when I visited. I thought that I should visit his mother as I was scheduled to return to Delhi the next day. On reaching Eden Hospital I enquired about her and the nurse on duty showed me her bed. As I slowly approached her I noticed that she had curled up like a prawn as she was having stomach pain. I introduced myself to her and told her about MARG, its activities and MARG's willingness to take up the responsibility of educating her child. With radiating twinkling eyes and folded hands she thanked me and promised me that she would never ever drink. After assuring her MARG's support I met the Nurse in charge and enquired her health. I was informed that she was suffering from lever jaundice. I left the hospital after saying a short prayer in my mind.

On my recent visit to Turnbull High School with SMILE representatives I again got an opportunity to meet Bishu. The ever smiling innocent face again greeted me with a Namastey. I reciprocated his greeting and took no time in enquiring about his mother's health. He nodded his face and informed me that she was no more. Something cold ran through my spines and I could not believe it. I didn't have the courage to ask him again if this incident was true. A soft voice from his class teacher whispered into my ears that Bishu's mother had really expired a month back.

What could I do that very moment? Except hold the young charming lad closely to myself and told him to study hard. The innocent smile and his determined look on his face told me that he would fight every odd in his life.

**SMILE and MARG representative visit Mim Tea Estate, Darjeeling**



On 20 September 2007 when whole of North Bengal was gearing up for the finals of Indian Idol, SMILE Foundation and MARG representatives visited Mim Tea Estate to seek a possibility of starting a Non Formal Education Centre for the children of Mim Tea Estate and its surrounding areas. With the help of Anugalaya a local NGO MARG had organized a small gathering at Mim Tea Estate.

Around 35 to 40 children accompanied by their parents/guardians attended the meeting. The parents showed keen interest in sending their children to the centre to learn. SMILE Representative Ms Rima Beri then visited the proposed two sites where the centre would operate from. MARG assured that they will definitely help the children there. Till date no NGOs have reached Mim Tea Estate to offer help towards development and MARG along with SMILE's help would like to Ignite Smiles there.



The final project proposal for the same has been now forwarded to the managing committee of Smile Foundation for approval.



**MARG Whiteband. Stand up against poverty eradication**

**Burdung Village (Gangtok) Calls for Help**

Burdung village lies above Sang khola on the way to Gangtok. It's a village where most of the villagers belong to backward sections of our Society.



People here live below the poverty line and there is no proper school. People living here are migrant labourers from near by places who have come for employment.

Most of the villagers do not have a land of their own and provide their manual services in the fields of landlords. Parents are not able to send their children to school as they cannot afford it with their meagre income.

During MARG's representative's recent visit it has been known that the villagers are very excited to have a non-formal education centre for their children and they have decided to provide us a land and their manual labour to construct a small non-formal education centre.

In this regard MARG is looking for potential partners for its support in igniting smile of the underprivileged children of Burdung village of Sang Khola.



**Nima Smiles**

He stood with his hands at his back, shy and wondering why he had been called to the principal's office on our recent visit to Ghoom Boys High School, Darjeeling. As Nima saw me he gave me a sweet little smile

The smile spoke of everything he wanted to convey. He was happy. I was then informed by the teacher in charge that Nima was doing well in his studies. I was also told that he was very good in football and had won praises from students and teachers of that school during the recent inter class football tournament. It was so good to hear that MARG's children were showing exemplary results in extra curricular activities too. We pray and hope that Nima would one day play for the big clubs in India and make himself and his family proud.

**Mid Term results of MARG Children**

During my recent visit in September 2007 to the hills of Darjeeling, I got an opportunity to meet most of the principals of the schools where MARG's children are studying.

I was happy to know that most of MARG's children were performing well in their studies. Their individual results speak for themselves. There were only one or two who had not performed well in their mid term examination. On having a word with them I was told that the environment in which they were studying was not good. Finally I was assured that they would perform well in the final examination to be held in between November and December 2007.

These few signs of commitment and development in our children give us hope and motivate us to work harder. I would sincerely like to thank all the sponsors in sponsoring the needy children and also request all sponsors to support us in future too. Your contribution has indeed ignited many smiles.

MARG wishes all its Well Wishers



A Happy Diwali