



Kailash Onlus
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BRAHMAPUTRA PROJECT

CONTEXT

This project is located and is presently underway in an area of strong socio-economic degradation, in the surrounding area of Tezpur.

Tezpur is situated in the Sonitpur district of the Indian state of Assam in Northern India. It is the state's fifth largest metropolis, extending along the northern banks of the Brahmaputra River and borders the state of Arunachal Pradesh.

It is an area where different ethnic communities, creeds and races live together in harmony and with mutual respect for each other; where mixed marriages between people belonging to different races and religions are very widespread and even considered normal. This is a striking characteristic that reinforces their peaceful lifestyle.

The most commonly practiced religions in the city of Tezpur are Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism.

The primary language spoken in Tezpur is Assamese, but due to its diverse population, various indigenous languages such as Bodo, Hindi, Mishing, Nepali, and Tibetan are also commonly spoken. This linguistic diversity contributes to the cultural richness of the city.

PURPOSE

For many years, the Kailash Onlus Association had acted independently and then subsequently with the support of UBI, the Italian Buddhist Union. Our involvement is concentrated on promoting dignified living conditions in areas of India where situations of abandonment and degradation involve numerous families or in the support of precarious healthcare situations with the aim of

strengthening medical assistance in the area concerned.

The Brahmaputra Project consists of the construction and completion of a 90-bed youth hostel. In this hostel, the impoverished young Buddhist children and adolescents of Tibetan, Nepalese and Bhutanese origin living in a state of extreme need will be placed and cared for. They may be nomads, orphans, abandoned children or just children of very poor parents from the surrounding Himalayan Mountain areas; the areas bordering China and Tibet.

These children are growing up in conditions of extreme economic poverty which in turn fuels and reinforces educational poverty and offers no promise of a future. In a country like India that has a population of about 1,417 billion people, this reality remains hidden and many people don't see, don't want to see or don't act to offer these little ones the possibility of more dignified living conditions.

This entire area is well known by Tibetan Master, Gheshe Lobsang Sherap, who had in the past created the Kailash Distance Adoption Program and who has traveled hundreds of kilometers far and wide only in order to verify firsthand the situations of neglect in which so many children are living.

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The State of Assam, in which Tezpur is situated, is very rich not only from a cultural point of view but also from an economic point of view. Assam is one of the largest tea producing regions of the world and is known as the "Tea Garden of India".

Unfortunately, in many parts of the world, where there is wealth there also exists an unimaginable exploitation of the less fortunate classes from which people are forced to work in unacceptable conditions for only a handful of rupees a day.

Tezpur is a very old city of medium size, the source of many ancient myths, and very green thanks to the many tea and rice plantations.

It is located on the banks of the Brahmaputra River which is one of the largest rivers of the world and considered sacred by the Hindus. The Brahmaputra is a trans-boundary river that flows through Tibet (China), Northeastern India, and Bangladesh. In this part of Assam, it can reach a maximum width of 10 km.

Most of the inhabitants earn their livelihood mainly from agriculture, through

the cultivation of rice, fruit or tea. Rickshaw driving is also a very common profession since this mode of transportation is widely used.

The high-altitude Himalayan areas around Tezpur are areas of strong social degradation. The villages (e.g. Lumla, Moxto, Bombdila) are home to very poor families, many of whom, including minor children, work on the roads that due to torrential rains, floods and landslides, require constant "maintenance".

The situation of the children, aged 8-10, who are already working as street workers is serious and dangerous, as adults cannot and do not have the resources to take care of them.

These disadvantaged children are completely illiterate and it is disheartening to know that they have no chance of accessing schools or any type of educational facility.

An interesting but even disturbing fact is that India produces the largest number of engineers in the world but also has the highest number of children who do not attend school.

The reopening phase after the Covid lockdown had triggered a new emergency in these rural areas; child labor and the shameful scourge of human trafficking are on the increase as a consequence of the worsening of the economic crisis.

In India, there is an extreme need to create child protection mechanisms and it is precisely the innocent children of poor and marginalized communities who must suffer the most and for some, sad but true, the streets have become the only home they know.

It was for this reason, that the idea of constructing a hostel in the surrounding area of Tezpur is becoming a reality. We have made good progress! It is being carried forth in order to give hope to the Tibetan, Nepalese and Bhutanese young Buddhist children and adolescents from the surrounding mountains who live in a state of extreme need simply because they are nomads, orphans, abandoned or children of very poor parents.

These young Himalayan children and adolescents are the center of the BRAHMAPUTRA PROJECT, whose objective is to remove these minors from the miserable conditions in which they are forced to live by offering them an adequate and safe structure in which to reside, to live a decent life and to begin their education.

The BRAHMAPUTRA PROJECT has been designed and designated as a facility whose structure will be able to accommodate as many as 90 children. The project even includes a multifunctional room to be utilized as a canteen, a study room and a location for other various activities.

The hostel itself will therefore be the actual home of these children, the home they have never had; a place where they will be able to receive the needed care and assistance they require.

These young boys and girls will be able to attend the Rastra Bhasha Vidyalaya School in the Sonitpur District of Tezpur.

The presence of a clinic is also fundamental and essential. Even though there are hospital facilities in Tezpur, they require payment. The BRAHMAPUTRA PROJECT clinic would be able to offer free medical assistance not only to the local residents but also to all the children, adolescents and adults belonging to the various religions and ethnic groups living nearby.

This clinic, within its range of possibility, would be able to offer medical assistance to these disadvantaged human beings and intervene where possible.

Our association, Kailash Onlus, will work in close collaboration and directly on-site with the Garuda Foundation of Tawang which was established with the aim of carrying forth charitable programs and activities.

SUSTAINABILITY

Education is not just a right in itself, it is a right that can lead to long-term social, economic and political change and permit the social integration of those people who live on the margins of society itself.

This project is a project of hope! We know that it is only a drop in an ocean of necessity but our experience has proven to us that every drop can make a difference wherever it may fall.

Upon completion of the construction, Kailash Onlus will continue its guarantee of all possible support in terms of human and economic resources, in a joint on-site collaboration working hand in hand with the Garuda Foundation who has the responsibility of the management of the hostel.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This project had been presented to UBI, the Italian Buddhist Union and they approved the financial support of 70% which made it possible to take all the necessary steps toward realization of the youth hostel.

The remaining 30% of the project cost is approximately 60,000 euro. This balance is the responsibility of Kailash Onlus, the originator of the project. It is for this motive that since the project has been underway, we have been raising funds using the various methods at our disposal: donation requests to our sponsors, donations from our supporters, organization of special events, conventions and courses as well as a presentation through a fundraising platform.

The land was purchased in November 2022 and cleared and excavated in preparation for the foundations and the construction of the building. As of May 2024, the 2nd level as well as the roof have been constructed.

For information and to follow the progress of the Brahmaputra Project please visit the website directly at www.brahmaputraproject.com