



THE SREEPUR VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2010

Opening of the Tommy Miah Tea Bar

British Airways no longer fly into Dhaka and this has resulted in far fewer visitors to our Visitor's Centre in Nikunja, close to the airport. We had been discussing how best to use the ground floor of this building and we were offered a wonderful opportunity. Tommy Miah, the renowned Bangladeshi chef, is creating employment in Bangladesh by franchising a chain of Tea Bars offering internet access, tea and snacks. He has been a supporter of Shishu Polli Plus for many years – he has

provided the meals for all of our celebrations including Pat's wedding – and he donated time, staff and expertise to set up a Tea Bar in our Dhaka Office building. This will offer training and job opportunities to our older children and women, and will bring an income back to the project. The Tea Bar was officially opened on 15th March by our UK patron Jim Fitzpatrick MP and our Bangladesh patron Mrs Khadija Islam in the presence of many guests and local visitors.



Update on Bina

When I was at Sreepur last November, Bina had been living with us for a few weeks and I never saw her smile during my stay. This photo taken in March shows how comfortable she now feels, and is a great testament to the staff and other women who have worked hard to make her feel at home. One of her babies has been sick, and she had a lot of support, both medical and emotional, during the illness. The twins are happy, lively and developing well, and Bina will shortly start on the vocational training agreed with her when she first arrived.

Trisha



Visit by one of our Trustees



Ruby Porter is a textile artist who has taken responsibility for helping with embroidery and weaving at Sreepur. She and her husband Ken visit every year with new designs and other ideas to help the women and older children develop their skills while working in groups helping each other. Below is a report from Ruby on her visit to Sreepur in March this year.

I launched a new project – Threading Dreams. We are now using embroidery as a therapy for our mothers to help them after the trauma they have experienced before they arrive.



Enjoying our Threading Dreams event.



Ken and I having great fun with the boys distributing football kits donated by Liverpool and Everton Football Clubs.



Weaving is flourishing at Sreepur. I was working on new designs for the Christmas market using natural dyes. We hope to publish a catalogue with Sreepur scarves, embroidered cards, cotton bags and other gifts before the end of this year.

Working with the mothers in the tailoring section.



Harvesting honey

It is currently the flowering season for the lychee trees which grow in abundance at Sreepur and in the neighbouring areas. This has resulted in a recent harvest of 6 kg of honey from our six hives, and we expect to harvest up to 40kg before the end of the lychee season.



Leaders for 2010



Each year, the women vote amongst themselves for leaders who will each be responsible for a group of mothers. This is usually the first time that any of these women are given any vote of confidence, and it is a system which works well to raise self esteem – both for the women who become leaders and for the women who take part in the process of voting. The leaders wear green saris rather than the normal blue, and the photo shows them with Khadija, our Executive Director, and Shipra, who is in charge of Child and Mother Care.