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Mala News

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An action programme for the elimination of child labour in rural India

Greetings!

Message from Anne in India

These are strange times here at Project Mala Schools, India. As the Corona Virus plays havoc with the social and economic structure of India, foreign visas suspended, travel discouraged and all schools closed for the near future, it seemed impossible that anything more could happen to disrupt the beginning of the new academic year.



Never mind that we wouldn't be able to do any teaching for a while. I thought there would be plenty to keep me and the teaching and admin staff occupied: curriculum planning, course writing, teacher training, small group English language teaching, organising the stock cupboard, categorising the library books, making teaching aids, finalising the class lists and entering the new data for sponsors.

Follow this link to a short video below



But even the weather seemed to be reflecting the chaos and confusion. On Friday 13 March, a hailstorm with incredibly high winds blew the roof off one of our schools. The storm was a freak of monster proportions with high winds and huge hailstones, the like of which has never been seen here.

The roof of our school at Turkahan was ripped off and the ceiling destroyed; everything scattered far and wide. Thank goodness it happened after school was over or we could have had fatalities.

The irony for us, however, is that we had used the best and most expensive materials for our school roof and, as a result, when the winds came they were unable to simply peel off roof panels and scatter them, as they might have done with a weaker construction.

Instead, the roof remaining firm and unmovable, the wind simply came in underneath and lifted the entire structure off, girders and all, and flung it bodily into the playground where it then proceeded to dismantle it and throw the pieces to the four corners of the grounds.

The disaster has affected the whole community. Many of our children live in mud huts with straw or tin roofs. These have been destroyed, so many villagers spent the night at our school as the ground floor was not damaged. Roads are blocked by fallen trees and the crops that were ready for harvest are almost completely flattened. According to the local newspaper, 39 people have died in Uttar Pradesh.

I almost begin to wonder if we are being punished by a biblical god and should I now be expecting a swarm of locusts?



written by
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If you know anyone who you think might be interested in this newsletter, please forward it on.

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