

**FRIENDS OF KHASDOBIR, BANGLADESH**  
Registered Charity No: 1116316

# **NEWSLETTER**

**SPRING 2016**

## **591 children qualify for primary school from Schools under the Sky**

December marks the end of the school year in Bangladesh and the new school year sees 591 children from KYAG's Schools under the Sky moving on to primary school. 191 failed to qualify for primary school and will continue in the open air schools for another year. Some 200 children dropped out

because their families moved.

The Schools under the Sky continue to offer a pathway into education for many of the poorest children in the area. During January the teachers were actively recruiting the new intake of children for 2016. and by the end of the month 774 had joined.

But the problem that they are up against is illustrated by the fact that 30 children dropped out last year to become tea boys working in various local markets. It's not always easy to persuade parents to forego this small addition to the family income in favour of the long term benefit for the child.

### **Coaching Class complete end of year exams**

Following completion of the junior school certificate exam in December most of the students returned to their homes in outlying villages, as did those in Class 10. The Class 10 students all achieved a pass mark in their 'mock' exams, and will take the public exam in a year's time, while those taking the JSC this December await their results. As a result numbers attending the Coaching Class were very low but in January the numbers were back up to 212.

## **Our AGM**

Every reader of this Newsletter is warmly invited to our AGM

**Saturday July 16 at 11.30 am**

*(Note change of date)*

**St Mary's Church**

**Nanpantan, Loughborough**

Please let Kathleen Jackson ([derkat.46@ntlworld.com](mailto:derkat.46@ntlworld.com). Tel: 01509 557740) know that you are coming so that we know numbers for the vegetarian curry lunch (for which a small charge will be made). Lifts from Loughborough station can be arranged if you let Kathleen know. After the formal business has been expeditiously dealt with we will hear from Doreen and Phil Watson following their visit to the project last November.

*Chairman*  
*Treasurer*  
*Newsletter Editor*

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**The Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP; Sir Kevin Barron MP**  
**[www.khasdobir.org.uk](http://www.khasdobir.org.uk)**

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# We're Off!



We now have a team of nine intrepid cyclists who will be cycling their way from London to Paris on September 8 -12. We are so thrilled that they will undertake this ride on behalf of our charity giving up their own time to take on the training. It is a mammoth effort to cycle 280 miles in four days but we have every faith in them. We have a range of ages represented in our group and it is wonderful that people are prepared to be so generous and make this commitment to our charity. We hope of course that family, friends (and complete strangers!) will sponsor them to support our small but excellent charity. All the money they raise goes to Friends of Khasdobir.

If you feel you would like to make a donation...not matter how small, you can do so by:

- **Writing a cheque** to Friends of Khasdobir and sending it to our Treasure Geoffrey Pool and if you are a UK tax payer please fill out the gift aid form on the back page of this newsletter.
- **Bank Transfer details:** Sort Code 20-49-17 Account No. 20587192. (Friends of Khasdobir, Barclays Bank, Leicester Haymarket Towers Branch). If you do make a Bank transfer can you drop Geoffrey an email/letter to let him know you have done so.
- **Online.** Go to [www.khasdobir.org.uk](http://www.khasdobir.org.uk), click on donate, scroll down and click on Bike Ride, click on the title which opens the fundraising page.

Treasurer: Geoffrey Pool Email: [Geoffrey.pool@ntlworld.com](mailto:Geoffrey.pool@ntlworld.com)  
Address: 7 St. Johns Road, Stoneygate, Leicester, LE2 2BL.

**PS If anyone is still interested we have places left on the bike ride!! Contact:**  
Maureen Haddock Email: [stemo@haddocks.fslife.co.uk](mailto:stemo@haddocks.fslife.co.uk) Tel: 07786 932339

## And if cycling is not your thing, how about a walk exploring the history of part of London?

There will once again be a sponsored walk in London on:

### Saturday September 3

This year's walk will cover "The Angel and Finsbury". The route will not be as green as some of the past routes but there is quite a section walking alongside the

canal and a number of places of interest – including Riceyman Steps for those of you who have read Arnold Bennett's novel. Either get yourself sponsored for Friends of Khasdobir or just pay the modest fee and walk for fun. A map and a description of the route will be supplied. Have an enjoyable day out and support Friends of Khasdobir at the same time.

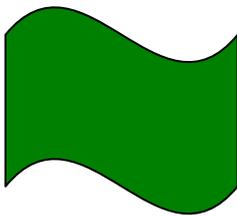
**To register your interest and ensure you receive all the details nearer the time please contact:**

**Jeni Gosling**  
**29 Westell Close**  
**Baldock**  
**SG7 6RY**  
[j.gosling@btinternet.com](mailto:j.gosling@btinternet.com).

## Sewing Workshop Successes

### 70 Widows Helped

The plight of elderly widows without children living nearby and able to support them is desperate and KYAG makes regular, tiny payments to 70 women who have been selected as being in particular need. Our founder, Peter East, was especially concerned about the plight of widows in a country with no kind of state support and many widows among the Friends are pleased to know that what they give enables KYAG to support such women.



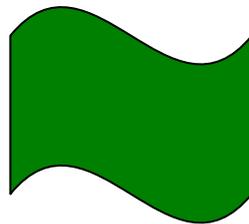
### Food Hand-outs

Every day people come to the KYAG office seeking help because they simply don't have the money to buy any food for the day. During January 168 items of food (rice, flour, potato, sugar, milk, oil or spices) were given to destitute people.

Obviously this isn't development work. It's something that KYAG would rather not have to do. But when people who are absolutely destitute come to the door, what else can you do? It's literally the difference between life and death.

Like the schools, the Sewing Workshop's year-long course ended in December. Of the 55 women who started the course, 35 were successful, five unsuccessful and 15 didn't complete the course. The 35 successful women have all been given Certificates and are now

in a position to stand on their own feet and earn their own living, either getting a job in a clothing factory or working from home. The five who have not yet achieved the required standard will continue and by the end of January had been joined by 30 new trainees.



### Medical Help

In a country with no National Health Service medicines have to be paid for and for many people in Sylhet that means choosing between buying the day's food or buying the medicine you have been prescribed. The cold weather in the winter adds greatly to the number of people faced with this unenviable decision and during January KYAG bought medicine for 91 people.

And, of course, not only do you have to pay for the medicine; you also have to pay for the consultation with the doctor who writes the prescription. That's why KYAG pays a small honorarium to Dr A Shahid Khan who runs a free clinic at KYAG every Friday. This clinic, which was attended by 31 people during December, was set up in memory of KYAG's joint founders, Haroon Ahmed and Peter East.

### Reading and Writing

The 20 women in each of the three adult literacy classes completed their six month course in December. They have all achieved a basic ability to read and write and to recognise numbers and in the process have gained enormously in self-confidence. A new group of 60 women began their functional literacy course in January and will complete it at the end of June.

### Exchange rate still unfavourable

The falling pound means that the money we send out buys fewer taka than it did when we agreed KYAG's budget with them. They have done what they can to trim their budget but if the remarkable work they do is to be maintained at its present level we really do need to increase the amount we send to compensate for the falling value of the pound. And we can only do that if we can increase our income. Over to you!

# YES, I'd like to help...

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post code \_\_\_\_\_

**Please complete either Section A or B and if you are a UK taxpayer and have not already done so please sign the Gift Aid form in Section C, making each pound you contribute worth an additional 25p. Then send this page to:**

**Geoffrey Pool, 7 St John's Road, Stonegate, Leicester LE2 2BL**

**A - by Cheque** (*payable to Friends of Khasdobir*). I enclose my contribution of £.....

## **B – by Banker's Order**

To: .....

(*Name of Bank*)

.....

.....

.....

(*Address of bank*)

Please pay to:

**Friends of Khasdobir.** At Barclays Bank, Town Hall Square, Leicester, Branch. Sort Code: 20 49 17. Account no: 20587192

The sum of £..... on .....20.....

And thereafter the same amount on the same day each month until further notice.

.....(Signature)

.....(date)

.....(Account No.)

## **C – Gift Aid**

**I am a UK taxpayer and would like Friends of Khasdobir to reclaim the tax I have paid on any donations I make to them.**

Signed .....

Date .....

### **Notes:**

**This declaration is in force from the above date until it is cancelled. It need only be made once.**

**You must pay in tax (income tax and capital gains tax added together), at least the total of all donations that you make to charities each year. The donation that you make to Friends of Khasdobir, Bangladesh is included in this total.**

**If your financial circumstances change, and you cease to pay income tax or capital gains tax at a level at least equal to the sum that you donate to all charities each year, then please let Friends of Khasdobir know by writing to the Treasurer.**