

FOURTH WORLD NEWS

November 2009

We wish to update Fourth World News as regularly as possible, but again we are much behind schedule. In this issue we sadly announce that Janet Ganguli, co-founder of the charity, passed away on 7th May this year. We take the opportunity to thank everyone who sent condolences to the family or attended the funeral and memorial services. Many of you have donated generously to support the work that Janet initiated. Your help is much appreciated.

The cancer and subsequent chemotherapy for the last four years had little effect on Janet's spirit to help those in need and stand against injustice. Since its inception she has carried out Fourth World Action's work almost single-handedly. In this issue we will look back at her remarkable life, her work with the poor in India in particular.

With Janet's death, Fourth Work Action had to reorganise its structure, the board of Trustees in particular and also certain administrative matters. Inside you will find an update on this.

Since the last newsletter (March 2008), Manan Ganguli visited the project in India on two occasions, first at the beginning of the year and then again in September. The earlier visit was also in connection with the campaign to release Dr Binayak Sen who was in an Indian prison at that time. Fourth World Action has been helping the campaign in a small way. In this issue we include a piece on Binayak and his arrest.

Thank you once again for your continued support.

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Janet Ganguli

Janet Elizabeth Ganguli, a caring mother, writer, peace and human rights activist and a genuine friend of the poor is a true example of living simply but achieving extraordinary results. She was born September 2nd 1949 into a Quaker family and was inspired by her parents to devote herself to national and international causes promoting peace and justice. She died on May 7th 2009 after battling cancer for four years. She will always be loved and respected by many both here and abroad, particularly in India. It was there in a remote village, amongst the poor, that she made her second home. Her book 'Under an Indian Sky' published by Penguin (India) tells vividly of her insight into this 'other' India she so loved.

After graduating from Sussex



University, she trained as a nurse and midwife; and in 1975, she travelled to India to find a place to put her skills to work. From 1978 she lived and worked in the remote Indian village for 10 years where she set up a health centre, trained village health workers and helped people in whatever way she could. The health centre (Ekta Niketan) is now run by the villagers themselves.

Janet's vision of health was not restricted to treating patients or educating in hygiene. In 1982 when food was scarce due to a failed harvest, she organised villagers to demand work provision and food grains from the local authorities. The local politician called her a foreign spy!

In 1989 she returned to England but continued to support the work in India. She founded



Fourth World Action, a small charity which aims to support small, practical projects run by local people and to help create a better understanding of the realities of poverty.

Janet wrote 'Time for Peace' for children to learn how to promote peace and act against war, a book that many primary school teachers have received with interest. Later she organised peace workshops in the local college which have now become part of the curriculum. Throughout her life she campaigned tirelessly for peace and protested against injustice, there was no stopping her. She campaigned to free Mordecai Vanunu and protested against nuclear expansion. In 2008, even though weak from her illness, she was at a stall distributing leaflets, collecting signatures on a petition and encouraging others to join the campaign to

release imprisoned Dr Binayak in India.

We will greatly miss her love, passion and dedication but will always feel proud to have known her.

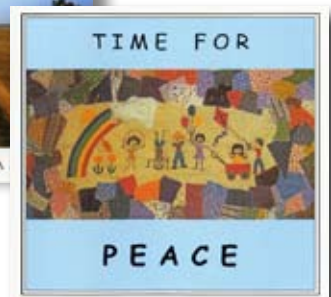
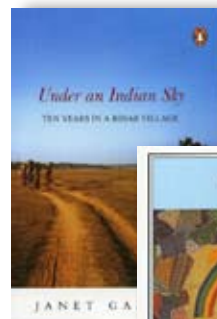
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Unfortunately '*Under an Indian Sky - Ten years in a Bihar village*' is out of print.

If you would like to have a copy of '*Time for Peace*', (£5+postage) please write to,

fourthworld@smallsimple.co.uk

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Ekta Niketan

(Manan Ganguli)

In September I visited Ekta Niketan and spent nearly two weeks in the village. Most days during my stay it rained. It took a few days for me to get used to the leaking roof, wet muddy floor, black ants and rats! Monsoon was late this year.

The villagers are very much dependent on the monsoon; this year the paddy yield will be less. In the past, bad monsoon, that is to say, untimely and poor rainfall, caused havoc in terms of growing paddy. Perhaps less so these days because new seeds have been introduced to the area which do not require as much rainfall. But those who are very poor will have less food to eat; they will look for work in towns to earn hard cash. The daily wage is now much higher than it was 10 to 15 years ago, but the prices of basic necessities like rice, potatoes and kerosene oil for lamps have increased many folds as well. Are the villagers doing any better in India that is 'booming'?

The purpose of my visit was mainly to find out how things were at Ekta Niketan. I also started to train Tikla to enable



Somra assists the training of Tikla

him to work more efficiently at the clinic.

The medical work at Ekta Niketan continues to grow. It is now established in the eyes of the villagers as a TB centre. The government TB clinics are meant to offer free treatment but patients often prefer to come to Ekta Niketan even though they have to pay for their medicines. The record keeping, the TB register in particular, is much improved. Now Somra and his team can easily say how many new TB patients are registered each month, if the sputum tests are positive. In the next issue we hope to write further about the tuberculosis situation in India and the role of health workers like Somra at Ekta Niketan.

Not all villagers make use of Ekta Niketan. Some are attracted by 'private doctors', the so-



called quacks, who will give a shot of injection and charge an exorbitant fee. Villagers cannot normally distinguish a 'quack' from a trained health professional, and they are often faced with no other choice. Basic health care rarely reaches rural areas and even if there are health centres in place, there are not always doctors available. It is quite common to die from simple treatable diseases. Ekta Niketan is not solving all the medical problems in the area but for those it reaches it saves lives.

If you would like to find out more about the Ekta Niketan clinic please write to us.



Health, human rights and Dr Binayak Sen

It is widely believed that India is the largest democracy in the world; it is also widely believed that India is one of the leading economic nations of today. India is booming! There is some truth in this but it applies to only a small proportion of India, not to the vast majority of the population. In India most people do not have the means or power to enjoy the widely advertised 'democracy' and 'economic growth'. They do not always have access to basic necessities including human rights.

Dr Binayak Sen is well known throughout India for his determined efforts to deliver health care to people in need. He is a believer in 'total health' and views access to health and human rights as inseparable. Dr Binayak is a highly trained doctor and a specialist paediatrician, more importantly he is a dedicated and experienced practitioner of community medicine. He left a prestigious academic career in Delhi in order to improve the health of the disadvantaged rural communities in the Chhattisgarh state of India.



He was arrested two years ago and imprisoned on charges of suspected involvement with Maoist insurgents. The local government has yet to establish the charges against him. Through the efforts of his many supporters he has now been released on bail. However his trial continues in 'shining' India.

What then has been the fault of the man who tirelessly worked for 30 years tackling malnutrition, tuberculosis and malaria in poor communities and promoting their basic rights?

For up-to-date information about this remarkable doctor, visit: www.binayaksen.net.

Fourth World Action has helped to produce a short video documentary, 'A Good Doctor in Prison' to support the campaign for his release.

If you are interested to have a copy, please send £5 + postage.]



News/Events

Funds/fund-raising

We would like to thank you for your kind support. This year many of you have donated generously in memory of Janet and we are presently secure with funds because of your generous donations. Some of you have made standing orders to keep the work going. Finally we wish to thank Peter Kerkar, the global CEO of Cox & Kings

for their generous donation and Laura Smith and Kate Blood who made it happen by running the Edinburgh marathon in support of Janet's work. THANK YOU ALL.



Administration

Sushila Ganguli has joined the board of trustees. She is a doctor by profession. The Ekta Niketan clinic and future health activities will benefit from her knowledge of medicine.

Anita Ganguli will soon be available to help with the administration of the charity. Both are keen to see that their mother's valuable work continues.

E-mail & website

You can now contact us by e-mail, the address is:

fourthworld@smallsimple.co.uk

You will also find news, updates and other information about the charity by clicking 'Fourth World Action' at **www.smallsimple.co.uk**. Please note that the website is not dedicated to the charity but the mentioned section is.

Memorial gathering in Fatepur

The villagers in and around Fatepur will organise a gathering in memory of Janet. The date is not yet confirmed, but is tentatively planned for the third week of February. A memorial stone will be laid in front of the mud house where Janet lived for 8 years.

Learning

We intend to produce some educational materials based on the experience we have gained with the villagers and to continue to deepen our understanding of the complexities of poverty. This will be explored further in the next issue of Fourth World News.

Within the Third World, there exists two worlds:
that of the affluent and the rich,
and that of the poor.

We use the term 'Fourth World' to describe
the world of the poor.



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