

MINI BENGALI CHRONICLE 251, JUNE 2021



DEATH OF FATHER JONAS XALXO FROM JALPAIGURI.

He was a Diocesan priest, but belonging to the Secular Institute of Prado. Although he worked at 500 km from the place I live, he was one of my best friends. As an Oraon Adivassi, he had a special charisma to make himself loved by thousands of people in his various parishes. Tribal, non-tribal Christians and non-Christians loved him everywhere he was. Unhappily, his two bouts of cerebral attack let him first severely paralyzed many years ago, and completely infirm some four years ago, without being able to recognize people. His departure is a great loss for the Church, for the Prado, and also for humanity.

THE 'YAAS' CYCLONE HAS MADE IN MAY SOME DAMAGES AT ICOD, BUT NOTHING VITAL.



One large tree has fallen above our « Temple of Mercy ». But thanks God, only the “peace dove” on its buddhist lotus has been damaged, and so several windows upon the roof and some lateral ones. All other structures have well resisted.



Trunks of trees that we have sawn...

WE SHALL SEE AT THE END OF THESE PAGES, WHAT CALAMITIES SO MANY PEOPLE ARE LIVING, EVEN TO-DAY, AFTER HAVING BEEN RENDERED VICTIMS OF LAST YEAR 'AMPHAN', AND THIS YEAR 'YAASS', ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE LIVING WITHIN TEN KM ALONG THE COSTAL LINE OF BANGLADESH, SUNDARBANS, MIDNAPUR AND ODISHA. HOW ARE THEY STRUGGLING UNCEASINGLY SINCE TWO YEARS!

MUSLIM IFTAR PARTY AT ICOD



We celebrate with all our young people, the end of the fasting of our own Muslim girls and boys.

NEVER HAVE WE SEEN SUCH A TRANSFORMATION OF OUR LANDSCAPE WITHIN THREE WEEKS, CONSEQUENCES TOGETHER OF THE SO VIOLENT RAININGS OF THE CYCLONE ‘YASS’, THE EXTREME PEAK OF THE HEAT, AND THE EARLY ARRIVAL OF THE MONSOON!



One simple example: picture above, the place where our girls used to make their cycling competition early May ... **And down within less than 15 days, then one month, the vision of a tropical end of monsoon!**



The play-ground...



The little path going to the women-ghât always becoming narrower...due to extreme vegetation



Both sides of our Biologic Island Preserve now completely blocked.



Several views of the modified aspects around the Temple, from above and from down.



View of football ground aside the 'Mother Mary's Grotto' and under the Temple. Our workers' corner

WHERE THOSE WHITE NYMPHEAS ARE COMING FROM ?

There are several hundred !



**Unhappily, they are blooming only early morning and when I am passing by 9AM, they are already closed!
And before, I was sick and after it was raining! Bad luck! Let us wait for July...**

NOW THEY I CAN USE AGAIN MY TRICYCLE, HERE IS MY MORNING TOURING OF OUR HOMES;

I. The school-going girls (10)



Most of the time I am meeting them in front of Ramakrishna/Sarada Mandap, and have nice talks with them.

II. GIRLS & WOMEN MENTALLY SICK (25)



1.blind & mental. 2.Paralyzed. 3.brought this week by the police, is amnesic, not even knowing her name! On right, deaf/Dumb, blind and 2 deep mentally sick. The dements and dangerous women come only time to time, accompanied. They are not here to-day.



1 & 2 : Birboti and her 'mammy' : found at Howrah Station in 1998, she hardly speaks, but is most of the time with 'Aloka', broken legs badly cured, and abandoned by her family 7-8 years ago.

3 & 4 : both paraplegics. Do not speak except indistinctly. One from Pilkhana since 20 years (26 years now!), the other from a close-by station since 10 years. But I am laughing a lot with them. Their best position is on the floor, although they use wheelchair except during the monsoon.

III. YOUNG MEN AND SCHOOLCHILDREN (15 + 10)



At my arrival, they spontaneously now sit down and put their mask. It is the only way to avoid to jump on me, embrace me, hammer me, explain me many inchoherent things and quarel among themselves.

Around eight are dumb, partially or...badly. At least like that, I cannot miss anyone. But I regret the previous chaos, where we laughed so much, although often I kept some painful bodily souvenirs! The red one without mask is the worst, but he is beloved. One is completaly mad and is with me since 23 years (at Belari) He is the last on extreme right.



All the younger are going to school. Some are orphan or belong to distressed families. Among them are our blind Darwan (orangeshirt) and an other elder is one of our ex-inmates who has become our cook (yellow shirt and without mask)..



Those two are always apart. The one with the turban is more than 20 and is helping as he can. But he is a real goonda, although lovely, and frequently escapes...to come back immediately. Additionnally, he is robber, and gives all possible troubles. We do not know what to do with him...but we love him...and he knows it... The second is quite young, brought by the police, is amnesic and epileptic. But a very nice fellow!

IV. AGED OR SICK ADULT MEN (10)



During this month of lockdown, are anxiously waiting for an hairdresser for their beards!



Those three are simply aged and sick. Next pic on left, brought by the police, but speaks only Hindi. He is from Andhra Pradesh. In the middle, totally dumb and mental. The last one is paralyzed, married, but his family does not want him. But he wants to go back and is always very sad!...



Both are sick(psoriasis and diabetic, last degree) Standing and with one hand is Nitay, our in-charge. The last one, Ashok, brought by the police, is confused , has got cerebral attack. Cannot control himself and his always wet and dirty. But tries his best to walk and move. He is talking a lot but difficulr to understand.

This Unit is quite difficult to run, and Gopa is frequently called by night. Most of them are dissatisfied of their life...and of their actual situation. But in comparison with last year, when 3 old men died, it is really quiet nowadays!

ICOD's GOVERNING BODY (7 members, one absent)



From left to right: **Member- (Markus), Vice-President- Sunit Sarkar. And four ladies: President- Subarna Bera, simple member-Mita Roychowdhury, Treasurer- Sahely Khan and down, Gopadi our Secretary and co-founder.**



As Founder, I am here only for the introduction and speech, but I do not stay, as I am no more a member. Binay takes the pictures and write down the minutes! And more!

ARRIVAL OF THE NEW DUCKS : they will be 50...



It is a scheme from Binay, who has also designed the cage! They will be sold by groups, and , with the benefit, white ducks and goose will remain in the pond. After five years of absence! What a joy for me!



GANDHI BHAVAN, seen from the island.



This Jacaranda, is one of the most beautiful tropical tree, has been planted 16 years ago, but has never produced more than two flowers, except this year...around 15. But the proper number must be thousands!



The three colours of the lilac-tree, between Gandhi Bhavan and Malala girls Home.



The largest of our 20 Frangipani (Temple trees)



Uprootes this week by heavy rains. All of us are very sad!



First time after 26 days I could stand. But the “nati” is quite more active, and so his “Didu” Secretary who still hold everything in her hands!



Landscape of the pond with its three islands or peninsula...

TERRIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE TWO CYCLONES 2020 AND 2021 IN THE SUNDARBANS



Le tsunami 4 m. high and more, which has ravaged all along the coastline several km inside.



Repairing of the broken dikes by the inhabitants themselves ! A huge and never-finished job, as I have seen by myself 35 years ago working with them!



How to repair my house and when, since it is the second time in two years ?



A nurse has to make every day 45 km crossing jungles and rivers with her baby, to vaccinate adivassis hamlets scattered in jungles. They are people like her, who are saving India, neither her government, nor the NGOs, nor the mega towns 'people! (Picture from the Telegraph)

SOME SPECIAL ANIMALS



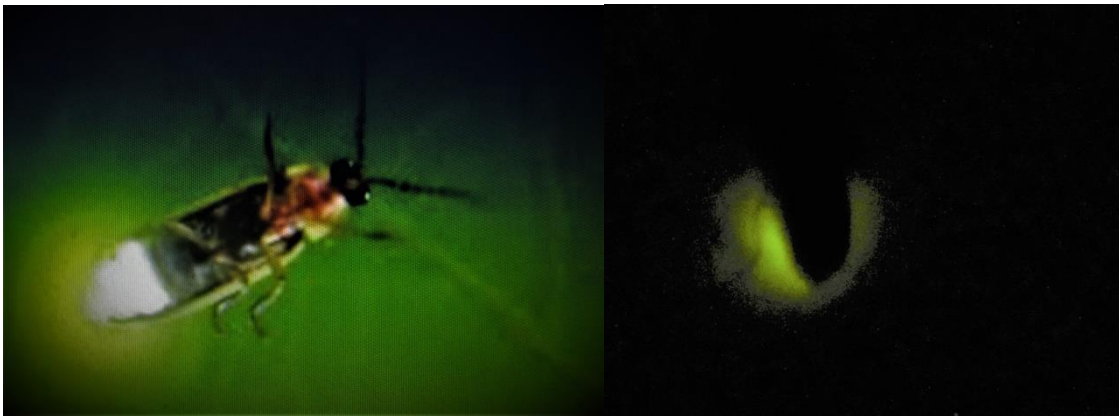
White-bellied moorhen(amaurornis) running upon the nympheas. Extremely shy, we have two couples of them.



Flying foxes coming to rob our fruit-trees on night. But why "our"? Fruit-trees belong also to them !



Bengali Terrapin tortoise. Around 2 kg and no more yellow designs are the proof of its old age ! Very welcoming host for our pond.



Fireflies in my room. There are 8 years that I have not seen them. Due to increasing pollution, they are quickly disappearing. Hence my joy! One is above a window-pane



Absolutely unknown insect . What's the use of this long ram above its eyes? (3 inches)