

BENGALI CHRONICLE 273, APRIL 2023

EASTER FESTIVAL

WASHING OF THE FEET OF 31 HANDICAPPED INMATES



Visit of **PRODIP, founder c/secretary of RAJAPUR, of Ramakrishna Mission.**



Washing of the feet and kissing them by our Founder, clothed as Jesus was, of **13 men**, all abandoned, aged, sick, handicapped or suffering of psychiatric disease, as some younger orphan, blind, Deaf/Dumb, trisomic or dements. At the end, several persons managed with Prodip to wash my own feet!



Meanwhile, Gopa-ma, Secretary, has washed and kissed the feet of **18 women**, the majority of them being psychiatric patients, spastics, blind, deaf/dumb or dementia-patients. Eventually, three inmates washed also her feet by force!



The way to the prayer House was beautifully adorned by tiger-lilies!

THE CELEBRATION OF FORTY YEARS OF SHIS,
FOUNDED BY
Md ABDUL WO HAB, who became **SECRETARY** and
SABITRI PAUL, **PRESIDENT** and **CO-FOUNDER**
in 1982 at BANGORE (24 PARGANAS)



On left, the Governing Body of SHIS with my sister President Sabitri, and on right my younger brother Wohab praising ICOD arrival.



The president Sabitridi welcoming with Wohab, Dada, Binay, Devdut, et Gopa-ma (hidden!) from ICOD.



RANU, member of the Ophthalmologic team, receiving Binay then Devdut.



Ranu's team.



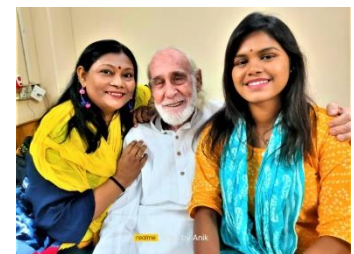
Under the sun of this first day of the second heat wave and with 41° (it reached 44°!), I started to vacillate and people realized that if I remain more, I will have trouble. Hence they gave me quickly the mike! Useless to say how much I praised the extraordinary work SHIS realized throughout those 40 years, in more than 14 Districts, through thousands projects, big and small, reaching millions people and treated hundred of thousands others! Few people can imagine the courage, the dedication, the imagination and the stress necessary to run such a big NGO! I am one of the few who can testify to their eagerness, enthusiasm and fervor. And during the coming of their DOMINIQUE LAPIERRE Dada donor, it was a fantastic festival of joy and cheers of gratitude from innumerable patients!

SHIS A/C LUXURY GUEST HOUSE FOR AN OLD AND USELESS CO-FOUNDER

They obliged me to remain several days, and it was by only and best holiday since 23 years!
It became a STUDIO OFFICE!



Sabitri, président and co-founder. Two Secretaries of NGO, Gopa-ma of ICOD and 'Paras Padma'(P.P.) with MINA and EVADAT.



Their younger son (the elder is in Bangalore). I had known Mina since her birth, and helped her when 18 to start some schools, and after her marriage to start PP. Both are beautiful and efficient "Shebok" social workers ... Their NGO is essentially for rehabilitation of several hundreds handicapped, through a highly qualified manufactory of artificial legs/hands/fingers etc...

THREE DAYS VISIT OF SUNDARBANS BY BINAY & DEVDUT: nice trip under 42°+ HEAT!



When I was basking at SHIS Guest House, they have visited the

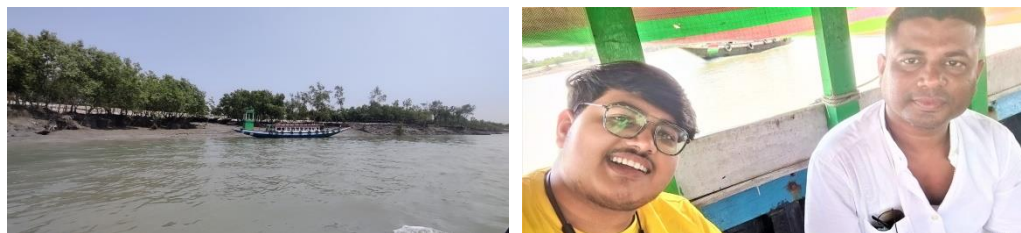
INTERNATIONAL TIGERS protection (WWF) and WORLD UNESCO HERITAGE CENTER .It is situated at Bakhali at the core of the world largest Mangrove Delta (145.000 ha in India and Bangladesh), where some 450 tigers are living, many being maneaters. I visited personally the whole area during 10 days, crisscrossing the channels up to the sea, courtesy of the WB government in December 2013, just before the creation of the Reserve.



Costal navigation boats for public. The Big boats are for tourists, which is an increasing plague actually. Last picture is one of the four Dispensary boats of SHIS which has been extremely precious the last ten years to reach the inaccessible islands.

Since 1982, I have worked with our Pilkhana Seva Sangh samiti team during some 12 years within all islands, to dig drinkable water pumps , organize dispensaries, rebuild villages crushed by three cyclones where I was present! Around 1990 (?) with Wohab, we have redesigned in the Howrah docks Boats dispensaries with laboratories, X Rays, pharmacy and medical staff (including doctors).

SHIS still have its four Dispensaries, but slowly they are becoming redundant in view of the modernization of the medical material of the government, boats including.



Devdut and Binay are enjoyong their trip, including following inside the jungle honey-collectors, always weary of tigers...and even crocodile, equally maneaters in Sundarbans.!



Internet picture of one of the Salt-water Crocodile, the largest of the world among the crocodilians!

« IFTAR PARTY », SHARING A PART OF THE MUSLIMS' RAMADAN

It is an excellent Indian habit for various religious or civil societies organization to be invited by some Muslims to share their 'breaking-fast' meal. I have been invited numerous times and in several places to share with them. But it is the first time that ICOD is inviting them. I thank Binay for this warm gesture.



On 19th April, more than hundred persons were sharing this meal : all our 35 Muslim workers in the new building were there, as also the Maulana(Mullah) of the neighbouring Mosque of ULUGHATA with one dozen of members. Our boys were closing the circle. One can note that most of our workers were not wearing the traditional "head-Kufies", as the group with Maulana or even myself. They also have started to eat before the traditional prayer, proving that in all countries, the difference between the practicing believers and the working class is real!



Two of our Muslime girls were here : AZYMA (who passed Matric) and her poor mother working as slave in the brickfields. SARINA, orphan adopted by Muslim parents who both died. Both families cannot afford to help their daughters to pursue studies. We want to avoid forced marriage by the neighbours...So we have to help them. SARINA is trained to be a tailor.



At 18.08, one young student is calling for the « Azaan”...and everyone can start to eat!



Essentially fruits : grapes, dates, water melon, mishti etc. Returning to their homes, a very rich meal will be eaten, for after practically 15 hours of fasting without food and water under a heat of 43-47°, hunger & thirst are terrible!



Some words about the Holy Quran...



Some shops have given us material to be distributed : good occasion to-day.

OUR HANDICAPPED BOYS COME TO ME TO ENQUIRE ABOUT MY HEALTH!



Deaf/Dumb, blind, autist, dementia, mad, trisomic etc...

« MOHILA KALI PUJA IN OUR VILLAGE »



The ex-Prodan responsible for this Puja is embracing us (Gopadi and myself) everytime.



Gopadi is always the Chied Guest. Many women from this group have worked or are working at ICOD.



They however are trying not to forget me, although the men are not invited!



On her old little temple, Gopa is keeping since 50 years (sic) her old stony Kali idol . Since her marriage, she is daily never forgetting to pour milk on it as well as her red 'sindoor'.

THE HORRIBLE CONDITION OF ADVASIS WORKING IN BRICKFIELDS (15 km ICOD)



Josna, 18, with us since 10 years. She passed Matric aHS.



50 families are living in this courtyard: Oraon and Go tribes. Each has one room 3x2 (for 5-7 people!), without windows or ventilation. Each tarpaulin is a door! No security for young or big girls! Josna's mother cannot work more after an accident. They are chased out of their room. We have taken Josna and young Raju for studies...Same situations for two of our girls, trying to avoid rampant trafficking, early marriages and drugs for boys...



At our car's window, the mother is so sweet and keeps her dignity to present us her boy Raju.

They are several thousands along the Ganga's (Hoogly) after Matapara. Alcoholism is widespread.

VISITS AND GUESTS DURING APRIL

Many ex-inmates, especially boys, came with their families...We were so happy to meet with them. But all the pictures have been washed away I do not know how. Probably my own mishandling of computer!

APRIL'S FLOWERS



Orchids in our veranda : due to extreme heat, died within three days !



Exuberance of « Madhobi lata » from Sri-Lanka.



Structures created by Binay with the same flowers in front of the garage.



Frangipani (Temple-trees) are embalming day and night the atmosphere ! We have more than 12 trees with hundred flowering grapes !



FIRST STORM SINCE è MONTHS...BUT ONLY ONE DAY !



Nice breaking of the unbearable heat wave, however short !