

# Ghar Sita Mutu House With A Heart

A home for abandoned children and training program for destitute women, in Kathmandu Nepal.

AUGUST 2006

I recently returned from Nepal and am happy to report that all is well with our Ghar sita Mutu family despite the turmoil and suffering throughout the country.

Our sewing, knitting and literacy classes continue to grow, and around 150 children who have never owned a book enjoy our Saturday Library, Art and Dance programs.

## POWER TO THE PEOPLE

The people of Nepal will never forget April 2006, and nor will I. The peaceful protests to restore democracy turned into a revolution. For 31 days, on the ring-road that encircles Kathmandu, and in cities all over the country police clashed with hundreds of thousands of protestors demanding an end to the King's autocratic rule. The people triumphed and the king had no choice but to give in and re-instate parliament. Today the King's powers have been stripped and he cannot veto laws like before. The Maoists are holding peace talks with the government now, and the mood in Nepal is more positive than it has been for a decade.

Many of you wrote to me worrying about our welfare, and I thank you for your concern. We stayed close to home and were never in any real danger. Early on the 24th morning when the curfew was lifted for one hour, I went out with four of the boys searching for a place to buy kerosene as we were running out of cooking oil. Govinda walked past a sleeping dog that woke up and bit him. (There are numerous wild dogs around!). I panicked a bit as all clinics were closed because of the curfews – and of course, no cars or taxis allowed on the roads either. The wound was small but there are many rabid dogs around so I knew Govinda would need a rabies shot. I had no choice but to take the boys to Jorpati and the main road in order to get to the closest hospital –near the Boudanhath Stupa.

In Jorpati thousands of people had assembled and were marching towards the ring road—



including Bidur, our house manager who we spotted immediately as he carried an upside down crown on a large bamboo stick that the children had helped him make that morning.

So we joined the protest and marched with an escort as far as the hospital. The mood of the people was positive, determined and friendly. Many people cheered as I went by with my boys, happy to see that a foreigner supported their cause. We arrived unharmed at the hospital but the march turned ugly shortly after we left when the police tried to stop the marchers joining with another group on the ring road.

7 PM that same night, on our third floor balcony, by candle light. Load sharing was in effect and our neighborhood had no electricity for seven hours a day.

I am with our 17 children, Bidur, and house staff, all holding our stainless steel plates, cups and pots. A minute's silence for the protesters killed by the police...then we all shout and scream and bang our tin plates in support of the protest ... inspiring some neighboring houses to join in. Then carefully down the stairs in the dark to discuss the revolution with the children and the importance of democracy – and of not surprising sleeping dogs!



### **FIVE HAPPY BIRTHDAY GIRLS**

On the fun side - our five smallest girls who had never celebrated their birthday as the dates are unknown – celebrated together on April 12. We had a cake and home made cards and gifts, and the birthday girls danced and sang, and the older kids staged a play for the little one's enjoyment.

### **MY RAIN!!!!**

When I arrived in February we moved the children into a different school. I have changed twice now. Most schools in Nepal slap and beat the children often with sticks, but this new principal assures me that this would not happen in his school. We'll see what the children say.

We rebuilt and changed the angle on our library's roof as it was sloping onto our new neighbor's new house and all rain run off was pouring onto his windows. Irrigation is a huge problem. There is nowhere for the run off to go and now another neighbor is complaining about "my rain" going on to his land! Unfortunately our good "top soil" is also going on to his land.

Monsoon rains knocked down our western wall and all bricks scattered into another farmer's field. He was not happy. Everyone but the farmer pitched in to pick up bricks, and we are now rebuilding the wall with a stronger foundation—very difficult in the ongoing monsoon.

Our solar panels for hot water, no heat in Nepali houses, crashed onto our balcony, smashed the wall and fell to the ground during a bad storm. Luckily no one was injured.

Thanks to GSN supporter Monica Witt, four women graduates received their own sewing machine, enabling them to set up small businesses in their own room. Last month after an interview on Worldview - Chicago NPR we received several more checks for our Give project, Thanks Chicago. I'll send you photos.

Happily, I now have two volunteers helping me in New York, Rafael Orlin and Alexa Doering, so between us we aim to keep you up to date on our progress. I return to Nepal on August 24th and look forward to seeing you on my return in December.

### **PARTY TIME – SAVE THE DATE**

Our sewing graduates are making puppets and bags that we will sell at our 6th Anniversary Celebration at PS122 on December 20 2006. Hope to see you there. All the best, Beverly



Thank you for your ongoing interest and support. All donations are tax deductible Every dollar goes directly to running and expanding the programs of **Ghar Sita Mutu, House with a Heart.**

Please make all checks payable to:  
**The Candy Jernigan Foundation for the Arts** (Our fiscal sponsor) Please note Ghar Sita Mutu on the check.

**\$5 buys a pair of school shoes**

**\$10 buys a bed**

**\$20 buys two school uniforms**

**\$25 buys eyeglasses and an exam**

**\$30 will feed a child for one month**

**\$50 will pay a teacher for a month**

**\$100 buys a sewing machine.**