

Ekerö 23th April 2017

Hello, Tashi Delek, Namaste

In this newsletter you can read a little about our children's distribution among gender and class, what a person last name can provide for information, what was decided at the annual meeting and that Chembal now is married and has got a child.

Now schools in Humla are open again



Since almost two months the kids are back at the School home and going to school again. There are now 50 children at School home, 26 girls and 24 boys. The majority of them, 32 attend class 4 to 7, 10 attend class 7 to 10 and 8 attend the lowest classes. The concentration to class 4 and higher will be accentuated in the future because in many villages there are now schools with teaching to class 3 and in some villages to class 5. This is a positive development that has taken place since we moved from Kathmandu in year 2010. (On the image

you can see two of our now seven goats, running freely in and around the School home.)

According to Chembal's report for 2016 our children have, as usual I would like to say, been very good at school. As in previous years, several of our students are in the top of their classes.

In the previous newsletter, we reported that our school is appointed to be the best school of Humla. Our sense is however that the teaching in English likely needs to be improved, at least regarding the children from KMCH. During our visit last fall we noticed that it was not only shyness that made it quite difficult to communicate with the children. We'll see if our feeling is right and what we in that case can do to help to improve their English.

This year, four of our students, all boys, are passing class 10. If they pass the final exams and become eligible for and wish to continue their studies, we have indications that the financing of further studies for at least a two of them may be possible. It feels gratifying.

At the School home, we have three different surnames

Almost all children at the School home have Lama as their last name. It indicates that they belong to the ethnic group Bhotia that lives in Northern Humla near the border to Tibet. It has Tibetan origins and has Tibetan language as their mother tongue. Bhotias constitutes about 15% of the inhabitants of Humla.

Our new cook and his children have the surname Rokaya. They come from a Hindu village, a couple of days South of the School home. Rokayas have close ties to Bhotias but have Nepali as their mother tongue.

Our nurse and one of our teachers have the surname Bhuda. They come from the South of Humla and have Nepali as their mother tongue. According to Chembal they also have close ties to the Bhotias.

The dominant ethnic groups in Humla are otherwise Chhetri (45%), Thakuri (20%) and Brahmin (6%). They all live in southern Humla, and are of Indian origin and are of high casts.

Common to the ethnic groups Bhotia, Rokaya and Bhuda are that they belong to the lowest caste in Nepal. According to the new Constitution of Nepal, the caste system is formally abolished, but according to Chembal it is still a strong tradition in the society. There are strict rules and marriage between people of different castes can still be very hard to be accepted in the society.

I have not directly noticed any of this during the stays in Humla, but and I have either not put specific questions about it during our hikes. However, I have a feeling that Chembal do not want to rest in a village mostly inhabited by Chhetris. On the way to the School home we pass just a few such villages. Already after the first day's hike, we come into the land of Bhotias.



Children play in their new sportswear.



Soon we can have butter tea. A drink that suites all times.

Report from the annual meeting

2016 was a good year for KMCH Support Group. We have already mentioned it in the previous newsletter. Read more about the year in our annual report, it will soon be translated to English and be available on our website www.kmchumla.se .

Thanks to the good closing balance we have been able to put aside a fund that we will use if we have to draw new water pipes if our present source should get dry. The cost of such an investment is manageable, according to the Swiss water engineer Bastian Etter who has pulled the current water pipes. It feels good.

At a board meeting just before the annual meeting we, because of that information, decided to

investigate the cost of building a second floor on the house that was built in 2014. It would, in our judgment, make it possible to accept around 20 new children. The investment and the running costs for the new kids will be met by the Family Olofsson's Foundation. Before we can decide we have to estimate the costs for the construction including necessary fittings and the impact on the running costs for around 20 new children.



It is the long house in the middle that may get a second floor.



Our bedroom last fall. Earth floor, tarpaulin, mattresses and sleeping mats.

We have also discussed various investments to improve the living conditions for all those who live at the School home. It is a shower-/bathroom, wooden floors, benches and tables in the class rooms, closets for the children's belongings, etc. There are a lot of improvements that we want to do but they can be fixed only when we get funds.

Chembal with family



Chembal became a monk at about 8 years of age at the monastery which is located in the same village as our children's school. Chembal got his education in the monastery. When he started as a monk the monastery was new and there were only about ten monks. When I met Chembal in year 1999 the monastery still resembled a construction site. Almost only the main building was then done. Now there are over 200 monks at the monastery.

In the early 2000s Chembal moved to a monastery in Kathmandu, and a few years ago, he left the monastic life. He now divides his time between KMCH and a travel agency. It is not uncommon for monks to leave the monastic life. A few years ago Chembal met Pema Yangchen a girl from Sikkim. They are now married and have a son, Tenzin Norgay, around one year of age.

For those who not have had time to do it, it is time to renew your membership or become a new Member of the KMCH Support Group.

We would like to see more of our donors also become members of the Association. It costs 100 SEK. Payment may be made separately or together with a gift, but don't forget to announce that you wish to become a member.

From other countries than Sweden use: **BIC-SWEDSESS IBAN-SE57 8000 0832 7990 4500 6518**. You can also use **PayPal** via our website www.kmchumla.se.

Greetings from the Board of KMCH SG

through
Hans



photo by Richard that shows a beautiful view from a spot on an altitude 200 meters above the School home.) (A

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