

প্রবীণী ফাউন্ডেশানের টুকটাকি The Probini Foundation Digest

In support of education for the needy & orphaned

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<http://www.probini.com/>

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Probini in the News:

New York City Comptroller Alan Hevesi honored Probini on September 21, 2000, for their work with the poor and the orphans, in an impressive ceremony at the City Hall. Comptroller Hevesi presented plaques to Sachi and Shefali Dastidar of Probini [*photo above, story on page 2*]. Also see *News India-Times*, October 6, 2000, p 51; *India Post*, September 29, 2000, p 24. *India*

Abroad, October 13, 2000, p IV, *Bangla Patrika*, October 13, 2000, p 61.

Dr. Kusumita P. Pedersen of Probini appeared on the front page of the Art Section of *The New York Times*, October 4, 2000 in connection with her text compilation and editorial work of Philip Glass' Symphony No. 5 which was recently presented at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Probini thanks its most recent contributors:

Mr & Mrs Ranajit &
Dipti Banerjee

Drs Bholā [MD] &
Ratna Banik

Ms Mandira Bose

Mr & Mrs Dilip &
Chandana
Chakrabarty

Mr & Mrs Sailendra &
Shree Chatterjee

Mr Dhruva Chowdhury,
CPA

Dr Pradip Das, MD

Drs Sachi G. & Shefali
S. Dastidar

Mr Shuvo Ghosh
Dastidar

Mr Pijush Dey

Mr Tapash Dey
Eastern Queens

Democratic Club

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Sibani Ghoshal

Mr & Mrs Neiladri &
Bhavna Ghoshal

Mrs Laura Healey

Mrs Joy Bridgelall
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CITY COMPTROLLER ALAN HEVESI HONORS PROBINI

By Mrs. Purabi Nandi

New York City Comptroller Hon. Alan G. Hevesi invited the members of New York City South Asian Community on Sept 21, 200 in the public Hearing Room at City Hall to join him in awarding several distinguished city residents who have contributed to the betterment of the South Asian Community in particular and humanity in general. Everybody worked in a different field and successfully alleviated the cause to a point where their achievements are clearly recognizable.

Dr. Sabyasachi Ghosh Dastidar and Dr. Shefali Sengupta Dastidar were among them accepting the award for their tireless work for the Probini Foundation which support the education for orphans in Bangladesh and India. This is done by personal donations and fundraising. Now there are many students who are benefitted from Probini, some get a continuous KG to high school graduation

grants for their boarding lodging and education and some get high school and college scholarships. Probini created several perpetual funds maintained by the interests drawn from fixed deposit accounts in the local banks in Bangladesh and India. Probini has been providing loan scholarships for poor college students. It is also paying for salaries of school teachers.

Sachi and Shefali are quite well known names in the Bengali community of both Bangladesh and India. Sachi is a distinguished professor in SUNY at Old Westbury and Shefali is a Senior Project Development Coordinator in the New York City Civil service.

We enjoyed them being awarded and we are very proud of them for their generous community concern and leadership.

New Sponsors:

Miss Ahalya Halder [age 7] at the Shishu Kalyan Kendra [Children's Welfare Association Orphanage], Calcutta.

Miss Hashina Begum [high school student], Miss Shubarna Barman [elementary school student] both of Gandhi Ashram, Noakhali, Bangladesh.

All the costs - room & board, tuition, books, clothing, medical, etc. - at both Shishu Kalyan and Gandhi Ashram are being borne by Probini till the children's high school graduation.

Probini is sponsoring another teacher Mrs. Koushalya Rani Roy of the Harijan Palli Sri Ramakrishna Bidyaloy [school] of Dinajpur, Bangladesh. From now on, Srimati Roy's salary will be paid for by Probini.

Venerable Guests from India and Bangladesh Meet With Probini

By Dr. Shefali S. Dastidar

In the Fall of 2000 Probini Foundation members and their friends gathered at Bellerose, Queens to meet with three Buddhist monks: Ven. Koruna Shastri of Assam, Ven. Bimal Tissya Bhikkhu of Calcutta, and Ven. Bodhipal Bhikkhu of Bangladesh. They all came to the U.S. to attend the Millennium World Peace Conference for Spiritual Leaders in New York City.

Ven. Koruna Shastri is the General Secretary of the International Brotherhood Mission and Buddhist monastery and school located at Mahabodi Vihar, Jyotinagar in Dibrugarh city of Assam state of India. His center serves 300 orphan and poor girls and boys. Two thirds of the students are boys and one third girl. Ven. Koruna Shastri recently wrote to Probini Foundation that an NGO in the Twang district of the remote Arunachal Pradesh state of India has sent 32 [Tibetan-speaking] destitute to his mission in January 2001. These orphans are from one of the most backward classes of India, and are seeking

admission to his Brotherhood Mission school. At the request of Dalai Lama, the Mission has accommodated about 20- 30 Tibetan kids.

Assam Government provided the land for establishing the Mission. Funds are provided mainly by the Goodridge Tea Company, and from some small amount of donations from other sources. It may be worth mentioning that Ven. Shastri recently sent a letter to the Secretary General of United Nations asking his intervention against destruction of the ancient and historical Buddhist statues by Taliban Islamic fundamentalist rulers of Afghanistan. Probini was given a copy of the letter asking for their moral support.

Ven. Bimal Tissya Bhikkhu talked about the "Sishu Karuna Sangha" orphan center at Moitrayee Nagar, Rajahat township in the north-east of Calcutta. This center and school were established in 1990 for the Bangladeshi hill tribes displaced by war in the Chittagong Hill District of Bangladesh. There are about 300 orphan and poor boys and girls at the

school. Two thirds of the students are boys, while one third are girls. This center is funded mostly by donation from France. To raise money they run their own printing press and bakery. Ven Bimal expects that the school will grow in size. The number of students is expected to reach 500 by year 2005.

Ven. Bodhipal Bhikkhu is a Buddhist minority from Bangladesh. For the past several months he has been residing at a Buddhist monestary in Bodh Gaya, in the Bihar state of India. Bodh Gaya is a historic Buddhist site where Lord Buddha attained His Nirvana.

All three monks in their presentation talked about the teachings of Lord Buddha, and the relevance of His preaching in bringing peace to this world. They also spoke about the pleasures of practising the preachings of Lord Buddha. A question and answer session followed their presentation. Ven. Shastri indicated that in the future he would like to be associated with Probini projects.

Probini Projects

Ramakrishna Orphanage, Comilla – Probini is providing scholarships for several students.

Dhaka Girls Orphanage Society of 1908 – Probini is supporting several girls until they complete their school education.

Barisal Poor College Student Scholarship – at the Ramakrishna Mission, Baisal.



Gandhi Ashram Trust, Noakhali – Probini is providing scholarships for schoolchildren and loan scholarships to college students

Jagatpur Ashram Orphanage (1898), Chittagong – Probini is supporting tribal boys until they complete their school education.

Manab Kalyan Kami Anathalaya (Orphanage for the Improvement of Mankind), Netrokona – Probini is supporting several boys until they complete their school education.

Harijan Palli Sri Ramakrishna Bidyalaya (Free School of the Sweeper's Colony), Dinajpur – Probini is providing funds for the salaries of two teachers.

Sishu Kalyan Parishad (Children's Welfare Association Orphanage), Calcutta – Probini providing scholarships for several girls.

Letters to Probini

Dear Probini

While I was in India a devastating earth quake struck Gujarat. Immediately monks and volunteers of our Sangha started relief work. The Sangha sent ambulances and doctors, and they are also distributing medicine, food, clothing and other necessities.

We thank Probini for helping the victims.

*Bharat Sevasram Sangha of North America
New Jersey*

Dear Probini:

We are active in spreading education amongst the economically handicapped. We are running three schools in the slums [of Durgapur] for the depressed people of India. We are facing severe shortage of funds.

*Swami Vivekananda Vani Prachar Samiti
Vidyasagar Avenue, Durgapur, West Bengal, India*

Dear Probini:

With humble respect I would like to place before you [the workings of] Madaripur Sevashram, a very important branch of Bharat Sevashram Sangha which was established by Sri Sri Gurumaharaj [Acharya Pranavananda] himself.

For your kind information we need to state that during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971 the temple and the student hostel were totally damaged by the Pakistan Army.

We are in need of saving the school which was started by our Gurumaharaj Swami Pranavananda. So if you know of anyone who might like to help us please let us know.

With kind regards,

*Brahmachari Jiban Maharaj, In-Charge, Madaripur Sevashram,
Bangladesh*

Dear Probini:

Srimati Koushalya Rani Ray, a poor woman of nearly 40 in age, having two small boys is the recipient of the Probini scholarship [to teach at the Sri Ramakrishna Bidyaloy]. Her husband works in a shop, earning very small amount. We are happy that we could, by your assistance, help those poor people. May God bless you all.

*Swami Amritwatnanda, Secretary, Dinajpur Ramakrishna Mission and
Head of the Harijan Palli Sri Ramakrishna Bidyaloy*

Dear Probini:

We have received the money for scholarship for another girl. We will keep the money in the fixed deposit and the account details will be sent to you soon.

*Purna Chowdhury, Honorary Gen. Secretary
Children's Welfare Association, Calcutta, India*

Dear Probini:

Names of [new sponsored] children who are being supported by Probini Foundation funds are: Shilpi Mondal, Jyashna Das, Suchitra Rani Sutradhar and Mukta Rani Sarker.

Funds have been invested in 8-year Defense Certificate. Additional funds will be invested soon.

*S. S. Halder
Secretary, Dhaka Orphanage Society [Hindu] of 1908, Dhaka,
Bangladesh*

Dear Probini:

If it is okay with Probini we would like to give the next Probini scholarship to Hashina Begum, a high school student, residing at our Ashram, and the daughter of Kanak Tara Dhuli, a widow and a day laborer.

We would like to offer the second Probini scholarship to Subarna. Subarna's mother, Putul Barman, is a poor villager, who came to our shelter expecting her second child, when her husband Subal passed away leaving her no where to turn to.

In the coming October 2, 2000, the Honorable Sahabuddin Ahmed, President of Bangladesh, will be visiting our Ashram when he will be opening the newly built Gandhi Museum.

If any of you and friends have any mementoes of Gandhiji and would like to donate those to our Museum, please let us have it. The restoration of the old building is estimated to be about 1.4 million takas. We would welcome any contribution towards this project.

*Jahrna Dhara Chowdhury,
Director, Gandhi Ashram Trust, Noakhali, Bangladesh*

I'd like to help!

Yes, I/We/Our organization would like to help

Sponsor \$1,000 Patron \$250 Donor \$100 Contributor (any amount) \$ _____

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Probini Family News

Gujarat Earthquake Relief:

Joy Bridgelall Karim led a drive to collect funds for Gujarat earthquake relief. The following individuals responded to her appeal: Eileen Hassan, Dave & Shanoo Bridgelall, Anne Bridgelall, Ross & Joy Karim, Laura Healey, Shuvo Ghosh Dastidar, Subhas Mazumdar, Sachi Ghosh & Shefali Sengupta Dastidar. Probini has sent a check for the relief work. Thank Joy for her effort.

Visit:

Sudip Dey is scheduled to visit our projects in Barisal and Dhaka in March and April 2001. Sudip is currently in Bangladesh.

New Home:

Joy and Mita Gomes Chakraborty are proud owners of a home in Queens. Although

already residing, they are waiting for an auspicious day for *Grihaprabesh* [home entering] celebration.

Marriage:

Neiladri Ghoshal and Bhavna Toor were married on February 25, 2001 during a colorful ceremony at Malika Palace in Queens, New York.. Soma Ghosh [NY] married Annindya Bagchi on March 13, 2001 at her hometown, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand State, India. Congratulation to the newlyweds!

College:

The following members of the Probini family have just graduated: Ms. Ishani Chowdhury from Baruch College; Bhavna Toor Ghoshal from Hunter College. Good luck!

Ms. Shelly Roy has enrolled at Queens College;. Joyeeta G. Dastidar at Vanderbilt Medical School. Congratulations!

Representation:

Ms. Vanitha Venugopal will represent Indian/South Asian views on behalf of Probini at the US Equal Opportunity Commission's Advisory committee in New York.

Mr. Gopal Patel and Mr. Gerry Weber have agreed to represent Indian/South Asian views on behalf of Probini at the NY Metro Region's Citizen Advisory panel of the Internal Revenue Service.

Please send your E-mail address to us at Probini@hotmail.com. Every \$0.34 we save helps to pay for school tuition for a child in Bangladesh and India.

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