

Gujarat Journey 2020 - NL 9 Mundra Boys Hostel

We were hesitant to visit Mundra Boys Hostel, because of our experience with their reluctance to change meal menus and to improve the students' quality of life. Two years ago, we discontinued placing any boys at this hostel. However, since then, they have been continuously asking us to come back and therefore, we went to see how things were coming along at the hostel.

Currently, there are only eight boys from ultra-poor families who have nowhere else to go. Unfortunately, nobody is passing through there to donate and the hostel has run out of funds. Local members are donating from their own pockets. Everything has deteriorated and looks old and broken.

The good news is that the caretaker is a tender loving gentleman and his wife cooks nutritious food. When we asked the boys what they wanted, they requested a washing machine as theirs was broken and they were washing clothes with their hands. We were able to use one-time donations to buy a laundry machine. In the past, we have also bought beds with bedding, television and refrigerator.

At the hostel we had a pleasant surprise, a boy found again! We had supported him since he was five years old, Firoz Kajani was in Malia Hatina hostel until standard nine. His mother remarried, and he had a lot of anger towards her for moving out of his life. He didn't pay attention to his studies and started misbehaving. Malia hostel complained and eventually he was asked to leave. He went to Surat with his mother, but he didn't want to stay there. She placed him in Botad hostel for two years and we lost track of him. Eventually, he ended up in Mundra Hostel to continue standard 11 and 12 studies. We were absolutely delighted to find him again and so was he!

Throughout our hostel visits, every child, even those who haven't seen us for years, always recognize and fondly remember "Razia Baimaa" by her name. The last sentence was Firoz Kajani's heart warming thank you for visiting the neglected hostel and giving them hope again.



Boys at Mundra Hostel



Firoz Kajani.



At Mundra Hostel.



From Mundra Farm.

While we were visiting the hostel, the local members brought a girl from the farms where her father was working. Amreen is five years old and goes to Nursery classes at Aga Khan School. Her mother is from Calcutta, a non-Ismaili. She is intellectually challenged, eats maavo (betel nuts and tobacco) and is unable to take care of the family. Father is a labourer; he would like to send Amreen to the hostel as there is no one to look after her. Her older brother, Ayan Zulfikar Khoja, is in standard three in Gujrati medium school. He needs English tutoring to prepare him to go to Aga Khan School. He lives at Mundra hostel so that he can have meals. We will stay in touch with this family and assist in placing these children.

Stay tuned for more.

The Gujarat Team