

newsletter



update from odanadi-UK

How your money is being spent

Mangalore rescue operation

Last August donations from Odanadi UK helped pay for a series of rescue operations in Mangalore, Karnataka. A well-established criminal network operates in this area, where child slavery has been rife for decades, so it was an important breakthrough when Odanadi field workers and volunteers exposed a trafficking ring and rescued six girls, the youngest of whom was six, from domestic slavery and sexual abuse. Five of the girls, all from tribal and forest communities, were reunited with their families, whilst the youngest remains at Odanadi where she is now attending school. The case has generated a lot of publicity, making a significant impact on the levels of awareness amongst tribal communities, who have since set up six vigilance groups in the villages the girls were taken from.



are set up in vulnerable villages across the state, usually run by one (paid) female representative, with the aim of unifying, mobilising and empowering villagers and community members. Over the past few months increased backing from Odanadi UK has enabled Odanadi to expand its reach into remote villages in and around Mysore district.

Vigilance committees

Local vigilance committees are a central part of Odanadi's grassroots approach, to stem the flow of human traffic at its source. These committees

Awareness programmes

Every month Odanadi holds awareness raising meetings in some of the villages most vulnerable to human trafficking in Karnataka – financial support generated by Odanadi UK is of vital importance to the sustainability of this programme. More than 60 villages across the state now benefit from this pioneering scheme, which informs villagers, children and schools about the risks of trafficking.

Residential care

Odanadi relies on the continued support of Odanadi UK donors for running costs of the Madilu Rehabilitation Centre and Boys' Home, which together house around 85 residents. As well as the cost of basic maintenance, food, electricity, water, medical and school fees, Odanadi residents benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities including karate, yoga, music and dance – all of which play a crucial role in the process of recovery. This year 30 girls took karate examinations as a result of Odanadi UK support, 15 children are in high school, 12 girls are attending college, and 7 studying for a degree. Improvements to the Boys' Home are still desperately needed, as they are currently receiving no government or outside support.

The European Convention on trafficking makes asylum seekers more vulnerable!

On 1st April the Council of Europe 2005 **Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings** came into force in the UK, committing the government to prevent trafficking and to protect and strengthen the rights of victims. The government has introduced a number of new measures including: a 45-day reflection period; a new National Referral Mechanism for victim identification; and expanded funding for specialist support services.

Although these measures appear to offer progress in our treatment of victims of trafficking, **they actually risk making victims more vulnerable due to the government's continuing association of human**

trafficking with illegal immigration.

As the convention stipulates: **'trafficking in human beings constitutes a violation of human rights and an offence to the dignity and integrity of the human being'**.

Responsibility for identifying victims will lie with the UK Border Agency, the body which deals with illegal immigration. In addition, the 45-day reflection period is intended to enable victims to provide evidence they have been trafficked and to claim for asylum if appropriate, thus prioritising criminal justice and immigration concerns. However, **those who have been trafficked are victims of**

gross human rights violations and are not illegal immigrants. This period should instead offer victims the time and space they need to talk about the abuse they have endured and an opportunity to make informed decisions about their next steps.

Victims will only be protected and traffickers held to account once trafficking is understood as a gross violation of human rights, rather than as an immigration offence, and when trafficking-related policy and legislation is victim-centred. The Council of Europe has recognised this, how long until our government does the same?



update from odanadi-india

Odanadi residents STOP TRAFFICK in Mysore

By Sarah Harris



At the beginning of March, Odanadi residents performed for crowds of over 150 people at a unique awareness raising event – the first of its kind in Mysore.

A beautiful afternoon of classical Indian dance, singing, yoga, karate and mime was specially created to demonstrate Odanadi's unique rehabilitation programme to the public, and showcase the strength and determination of its residents.

Volunteers, yoga students, families, local businesses and members of the press gathered to show their support for Odanadi, in the shaded gardens of a local house.

Under the trees, Odanadi girls created an 'art space' where glittering paper bags and photographs hung from the branches; a display of their creative talent and entrepreneurial capabilities.

Inside, a striking exhibition photographs and postcards taken by Vogue lifestyle photographer Kristin Perers, managed to raise almost £1000 for the women and children of Odanadi.

But the greatest success were the levels of interest and support generated within the local community. A truly fantastic day.

NEWS & HOT topics

- **Two Odanadi sisters** have been reunited with their mother, a former prostitute, after more than eight years. Chaitra and Pushpa will continue with college and school and visit Odanadi regularly for family counselling.

- In April the **Odanadi drama team** won first prize in a high-profile theatre competition, with a powerful street play on the issue of moral policing and women's rights. They were competing against some of the best colleges, universities and professional groups in Karnataka State.

- Last month Odanadi arranged a one-day **specialist training programme** for 60 counsellors from across the state, on how to counsel the victims of human trafficking, domestic abuse and prostitution.

- Last month Odanadi boys and girls joined forces for the annual Odanadi **Summer Camp**. The 10-day residential camp included arts and adventure sports, such as rope climbing and hill walking – plus training in rain water harvesting, dam building and water management. The aim of this programme is to help build childrens' confidence, ability to work as a team and general life skills. 60% of the costs were paid for from Odanadi UK donations.

- The countdown to the Odanadi **GO! STOP Trafficking Bike Ride** has begun. At the end of this month, 22 Odanadi residents and 10 foreign volunteers will embark on a 30-day bike ride across Karnataka, stopping in 70 villages along the way, to raise awareness of human trafficking. In every village a tree will be planted as a gift to the villagers and a reminder about the importance of taking care of the environment. The trip also serves an important function in the rehabilitation process; by mixing with mainstream society every girl is expected to gain vital life skills and practical experience, whilst building her confidence and physical strength. If you are interested in participating or making a donation please contact Sarah Harris at sarahhar@gmail.com.

Quiz Night

Thursday 2 July

arrive 7pm
prompt start 7.30pm

Think you're Clever?

We are holding another tantalizing quiz night at a new venue **Canal 125**.

It is a beautiful, spacious bar serving good nosh. Nearest tube Kings Cross 125 Caledonian Road, London .N1 9RG. DJ Kate will keeping us in the groove.

£10.00 entry. Friends and family welcome!! 6 people in each team.

If you can make it, let us know at info@odanadi-uk.org



Odanadi boys at Summer camp



BINGO fundraising event took place on 24 March at the Old Queen's Head in Islington, London. It was attended by 52 people and raised £1,240. We also signed up 6 new regular donors giving us £600 pa. Gala, the Bingo experts helped us run the evening making it an authentic and fun experience for all those involved. Prizes included dinner for 4 at the Queensway Casino in London courtesy of Gala, Mac cosmetics sets, Aveda toiletry sets, Diesel clothing, Fabris Lane sunglasses, Terra Plana voucher for shoes and a large selection of newly released DVDs and CDs. Thank you to you all for supporting this event.