



NYATRI Polish Aid Foundation for Children of Tibet

Dolanji - *The forgotten world*



Far, far away in a lost valley beneath the Himalayas in Northern India, there is a village called Dolanji. More than 1,000 Tibetan refugees live there. Among them there are more than 500 children. These children live in two orphanages - hostels: Bon Children Welfare Center (BCWC) for boys, which houses candidates who wish to become monks - and Bon Children's Home for boys and girls, which houses children without parents and those from the poorest families.

With growing interest in the unique Bon religion (whose main monastery Menri after ruination in Tibet was set and built again in Dolanji) and increased awareness of the necessity to protect the Tibetan culture, numerous non-governmental international organizations are present, mostly from the U.S.A., Switzerland, Austria, France and Netherlands and also from Poland. Polish organization NYATRI Aid Foundation for Children of Tibet is the most active among all aid organizations helping children from the Bon Children's Home in Dolanji.



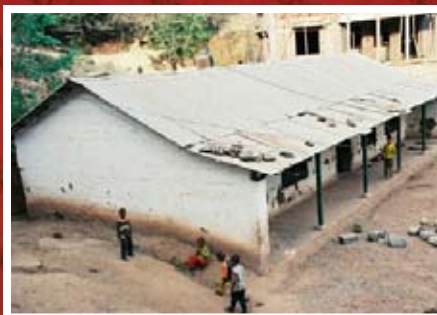
Bon Children's Home - *The new home*



Bon Children's Home (BCH) was established in 1987 by Tibetan Bonpo monk and teacher, Geshe Nyima Dakpa Rinpoche, who since that time has been the acting Director of BCH. The first group of 48 children arrived to BCH in 1988 and every year since then about 20 to 30 new children arrive to BCH from India, Nepal or Bhutan. In 2009 there were already 300 children living at BCH. Between 1998 and 2001 all children - and until 2007 some of the children - were living in little clay-houses. In the years between 2001 and 2009 the SOS Children's Villages sponsored construction of 5 new houses for 300 children. The NYATRI Foundation helped to finance some of the equipment for this project.



BCH and school in Dolanji, 2000.

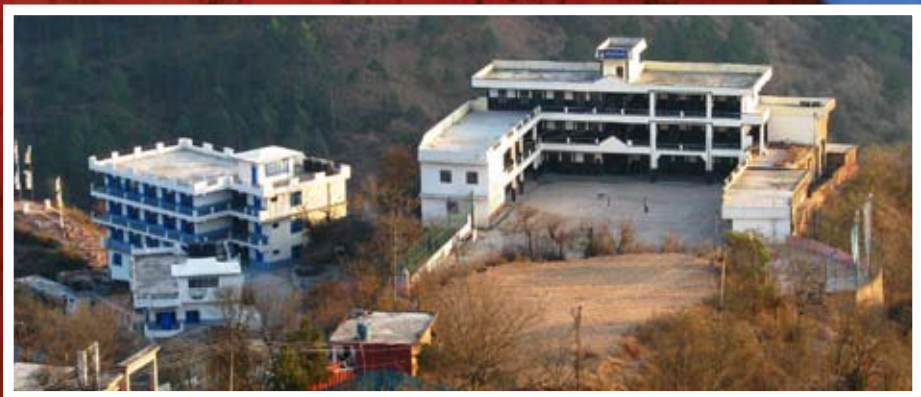


Barracks of BCH in 2004.



New houses in 2006.

Children of BCH attend the local Central School for Tibetans, which has 10 grades and is located next to BCH's premises. However, completing a secondary education or reaching a higher education is possible only outside of Dolanji and is fully dependent upon support of the child by private sponsors. For those most talented children without a private sponsor, BCH tries to pay for the costs of higher education from general donations.



New BCH and school buildings in 2009.

NYATRI Polish Aid Foundation for Children of Tibet



NYATRI Polish Aid Foundation for Children of Tibet was officially established in July 2005 to help BCH. As of May 2010 there were 280 registered supporters - Heart Parents – sponsoring approximately 260 children from BCH through the Heart Adoption Program and providing grants to 16 students for higher education.

The Foundation also sponsors other BCH needs, like solar water heating system; equipping the rooms with mattresses, bed-clothes and sleeping bags; medicine; books, stationery and other school articles for students; and clothes and shoes.

All NYATRI Foundation members and supporters are volunteers and don't receive any remuneration for their work. And even more than that: all of them are Heart Parents, sponsoring at least one of child from BCH.



In January 2010 the NYATRI Foundation was registered in Polish court as a Public Benefit Organization.

The NYATRI Foundation's most important aid programs are:

- **Heart Adoption Program** - a kind of virtual adoption program where a child is financially supported by a sponsor - a Heart Parent. The unique advantage of this program is the possibility of direct contact between the sponsor and supported child;
- **Educational Program** - is a scholarship program that provides help to the children of BCH to gain access to secondary and higher education;
- **MediCare Program** - aims to provide basic medical and dental care for the children of BCH.

As of today, the NYATRI Foundation is the only Polish organization supporting BCH.

Heart Adoption - giving children *hope*



The Heart Adoption Program is suited for those ready to take long-term responsibility to sponsor a child from BCH. A monthly payment for a child who lives in BCH and goes to the local school in Dolanji is 25 USD. When a child starts their higher education outside of Dolanji the payments increase to 75 USD.

The main rule is that children are sponsored as long as they study. Such a rule stimulates the children to study and to continue their education in secondary and high schools.

Children maintain contact with their Heart Parents by writing letters. At the end of each school year Heart Parents receive confirmation of their contribution to the Foundation and BCH, copies of School Progress Reports and greeting cards from their child. Some Heart Parents even go to India to meet „their children”.

- “The children correspond with people from a different country and culture, which widens their view, awakens their interests in the world and encourages studying English. The Heart Adoption Program brings the children some joy, optimism, and eagerness to study; it brings them a chance for better life. A child not only knows that somewhere out there is someone who thinks and cares about them, the child also realizes that they are important to someone and brings a joy to the life of their distant friend and sponsor.” – as told by Agnieszka Golczynska-Grondas, Coordinator of the Heart Adoption Program.

The money paid to the Heart Adoption Program covers the basic needs and costs of BCH: providing food, hygienic and cleaning articles, clothes and shoes. In general the payments for one child go to a single budget that does not distinguish between sponsored or non-sponsored children. Therefore the more children who have individual sponsors, the higher will be the quality of living of all children.



Since 2005 more than 260 children of BCH have been sponsored by the Heart Adoption Program of the NYATRI Foundation.

MediCare Program



The main aim of the MediCare Program is providing basic medical and dental care for the children of Bon Children's Home.

At present, BCH has no medical assistant or nurse to provide basic health care for the children. BCH lacks basic medicines and wound dressings. As a result, the children suffer from fungal infections, colds, infected injuries and other health problems. If some serious disease or injury occurs, the children are taken to the doctor in the nearest town Solan, but medical consultations there must be paid. The cost of consultations and hospital care is as high in India as it is in Poland; these costs are exorbitant for BCH.

The MediCare Program of the NYATRI Foundation collects funds to be used as follows:

1. Purchase, in India, medicines and wound dressing materials for BCH;
2. Cover the cost of medical assistance and dental care and cost of hospital stays, if necessary;
3. Employ a permanent nurse at BCH;
4. Running the project „A Dentist for Tibetan Children”.

Thanks to the support of Polish Firemen and the NYATRI Foundation, BCH was equipped with fire extinguishers and First Aid kits.

In July 2009 the NYATRI Foundation ran an urgent fundraising effort to cover the cost of a heart operation for Dechen Tsomo, a 17 year old BCH ward and student of Tibetan Institute in Varanasi, India. With the donations of sponsors, the NYATRI Foundation was able to cover one-third of the operation's cost. In August 2009 the complicated (duration 7 hours) heart operation was performed in a hospital in Chandigar, India. Today, following a period of convalescence, Dechen Tsomo enjoys good health.



A Dentist to Children of Tibet Project



Dr. Bart and Dr. Jacek Pawlowski
in dentist's office, Dolanji.

The most important MediCare Project of the NYATRI Foundation is „A Dentist to Children of Tibet” which was initiated and coordinated by a dentist named Bartosz Niedziolka. The Project's aim is to equip a dentist's office and to provide much needed dental care for children living at BCH. In October 2009 Dr. Bartosz Niedziolka and Dr. Jacek Pawlowski spent one month at BCH, bringing with them the first part of the equipment, including a mobile unit, scaler, fillings, mouth washes, toothpaste, etc. They examined all the children and cleaned the plaque, sealed fissures in permanent molar teeth, impregnated cavities in milk teeth, filled the cavities with glacionomers and composites, etc. They did this not only for all the children in BCH but also for most kids from BCWC (the monastery). They also had many patients from nearby villages. For most of these patients it was their first contact with a dentist. In total the doctors saw 481 patients.

- „At our request the children drew pictures that we hung on the walls, which made the room much cozier. We also asked them to write in Tibetan „Welcome to the dental paradise” and hung this cute welcome sign on the door. After a few days we managed to learn some basic phrases (phonetically): Ma siuk - sit down; Ka Dang - open your mouth; Ka Tsum - close your mouth; Siegomare - don't worry.” - recalls Dr. Bartosz Niedziolka.

- „During the so-called „hygiene hour” we tried to teach them in the easiest way what young people should know about the body and its care. It turned out that some children did not have a toothbrush or toothpaste nor had they ever seen a dentist. That is why every child got a toothbrush, toothpaste and dental floss.” -



Dr. Bart with a cute patient.

Today we work on obtaining the remaining equipment for the dentist's office and organizing the next trip of dentists to Dolanji at the beginning of 2011.

Educational Program

The main aim of the Educational Program is providing every child of BCH the possibility to obtain an education according to their interests, abilities and ambitions.



- „The youth of BCH are very ambitious. They know well that a good education is their only key to better future. Most of them dream about socially useful studies. They want to become nurses, doctors and teachers. But without our sponsors, higher education is beyond their reach. In BCH there are many talented pupils in music, fine arts and sports. The scholarship program provides them the opportunity to develop those passions.” - as told by Natalia Bieniaszewska, Coordinator of the Educational Program.

The Educational Program works through:

1. **Students Poll** – fundraising and coordinating the fund for supporting the studies of pupils of BCH;
2. **Scholarship Fund** – fundraising and coordinating scholarships funded by companies or institutions to the most talented or gifted pupils, providing them studies in in-demand fields;
3. **“Private Grant for..”** – promoting the idea among the Heart Parents of saving money now for higher education in the future while their children live in BCH;
4. Supporting different projects or ideas intended to improve access to information by children in BCH, such as The Library Project.

16 college and high school students are already sponsored by the Educational Program. 14 others are still awaiting support. We expect 30 new pupils of BCH will need help in 2010.

Library Project - *a window to the world*



- *"My Dearest Karmic Mum!*

With all my heart I would like to say thank you for all the clothes and shoes you sent me. You ask what more I need? I wish I had an English grammar textbook and maybe some storybooks. But I don't want to bother you too much. I am truly saying all I need is your love." - wrote 12-year old Kel-sang Tsering to her Heart Mother in Poland.

Children are aware that not only rice and water are essential to live and that the roof above and a warm, dry bed is not everything. They are curious about the world and thanks to contact with Heart Parents they see the importance of learning English. They are ambitious and desire knowledge. But that's not so easy when there is a shortage of books. Heart Parents send books to their children, and after reading the children pass the books to their friends and to other children. But there is no proper room in BCH where the books could be kept and made accessible to all children.

Therefore, at the end of 2009 Tomasz Piotrowski, Heart Father, initiated the Library Project – integrating activities of Heart Parents, the NYATRI Foundation and BCH management. The aim of the Project is to fund a library and reading room for children at BCH, including adapting and equipping the room, gathering a collection of books, and introducing children-volunteers to help manage the library.

The most important problem that must be solved is the lack of a suitable room for a library in the BCH complex.



Library in Arya Tara School, Nepal.

NYATRI Foundation *public relations*



Presentation on public events:

- * „Wake up the dreams” International Children’s Day 2008, Warsaw;
- * „Warsaw to the Children” International Children’s Day 2009, Warsaw;
- * „Autumn SymPhony of Hearts” 2009 and 2010, event organized by The Polish Multiple Sclerosis Society (PTSR), Warsaw.

Meetings and lectures - examples:

- * Dr. Bartosz Niedziolka lecture about „A Dentist to Children of Tibet Project” for students of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan;
- * Dr. Bartosz Niedziolka meeting with students of Foreign Language Teacher Training College in Stary Tomysl - lecture about children of Dolanji;
- * Dr. Natalia Maksymowicz lecture about Tibetan Refugees in Dolanji and the children of BCH, Municipal Museum in Zory, Silesia.

Press publications - examples:

- * Pozytywny Impuls (Positive Impulse) Quarterly 1/2009 – „A Heart to Adoption” an article by Iza Czarnecka;
- * QFant Magazine 5/2010 – „Children of Tibet” an article by Natalia Bieniaszewska;
- * Glos Wielkopolski (Great Poland Voice) Journal, 29.11.2009 - a report from „A Dentist to Children of Tibet Project.”

Television coverage – examples:

- * „Polish Heart in Tibet” documentary about a trip of Heart Mother, Natalia Maksymowicz, to her Daughter of Heart at BCH in Dolanji; by A. Golebiewski and W. Czechowski; broadcast in TVP;
- * „A Polish Dentist in India” a report of „A Dentist to Children of Tibet Project, broadcast in TVN24.

Radio broadcasting – examples:

- * A set of programs about „A Dentist to Children of Tibet Project,” Radio Merkury, Poznan.

Publications – examples:

- * „Tibet. True Stories” first comic book about Tibet - „A way to school” story about Tashi Wangmo, a pupil of BCH. Fundacja Inna Przestrzen / The Other Space Foundation, Poland;
<http://ratujtybet.org/65-dzieci.htm>
- * „Children of BCH” wall calendars 2009 and 2010 of NYATRI Foundation.

Nyatri Foundation - *main achievements*



- **Heart Adoption Program** - at the beginning of 2010 all the children of BCH were covered by the Program. As of today, there are no children waiting to participate in Heart Adoption.
- **MediCare Program** - we completed the first stage of „A Dentist to Children of Tibet Project.” In October 2009, two dentists, Bartosz Niedziolka and Jacek Pawlowski, together with NYATRI volunteers traveled to Dolanji and delivered the first part of the dentist’s office equipment, opened the dentist’s office, examined and provided treatments to more than 480 patients, including children from BCH, young monks from Menri monastery and people from local villages. The next trip of dentists to Dolanji is planned at the beginning of 2011.
- **MediCare Program** - successfully organized a very urgent fundraising effort to cover the costs of a heart operation for Dechen Tsomo, a 17 year old BCH ward and student of Tibetan Institute in Varanasi, India.
- **Public Benefit Organization** - in January 2010 NYATRI Foundation was registered in Polish court as a Public Benefit Organization (OPP) and was granted the right to solicit donations of 1% of personal tax to the Foundation.
- **Media** - „Polish Heart in Tibet” documentary about the Heart Adoption Program and Bon Children’s Home in Dolanji. It was produced by A. Golebiewski and W. Czechowski and broadcast in TVP (Polish Public Television) in 2007.

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Get to know more about Nyatri Foundation:

www.nyatri.org

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