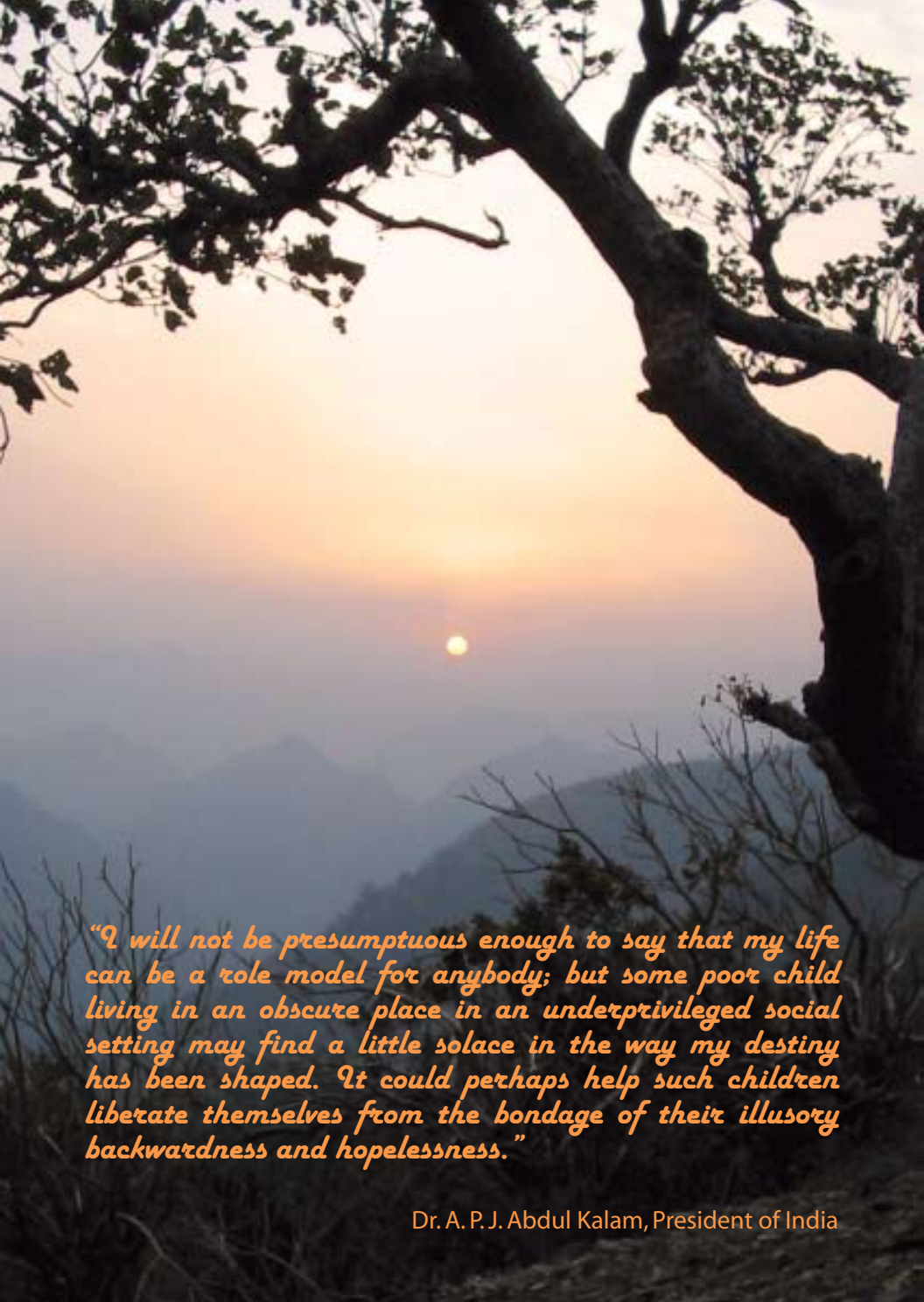




‘Ek Prayas’

.....valuing every child’s dreams

(FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY)

A photograph of a sunset or sunrise. The sun is a bright orange circle in the center of the frame, partially obscured by the dark, silhouetted branches of a large tree on the right. The sky is a gradient of light orange and yellow. In the background, there are hazy, blue-tinted mountains. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

"I will not be presumptuous enough to say that my life can be a role model for anybody; but some poor child living in an obscure place in an underprivileged social setting may find a little solace in the way my destiny has been shaped. It could perhaps help such children liberate themselves from the bondage of their illusory backwardness and hopelessness."

Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, President of India



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MESSAGE

The President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, is happy to know that the Kinderhilfswerk – India, Dehradun is celebrating its Silver Jubilee and bringing out a Special Issue of “Ek Prayas 2006” to commemorate the occasion.

The President extends his warm greetings and felicitations to all those associated with the Organisation and wishes the Silver Jubilee Celebrations all success.

PRESS SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT

Stephen Sangay Hishey
(1954 -2006)

This issue of Ek Prayas is dedicated to the fond memory of Stephen Sangay Hishey, founding member and former Director of Kinderhilfswerk. His smiling face and willingness to listen, appreciate, nurture and lead is greatly missed by us all.



*“... hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes
shine through the gloom and point me to the skies
heaven’s morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows flee
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me ...”*



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Respected Madam / Sir,

It is a privilege for me to present before you “Ek – Prayas” the Annual Report of Kinderhilfswerk Society (KHW). Ek Prayas 2006 is special as it heralds the 25th year of KHW’s service. From small humble beginnings in 1982 KHW has grown closer to its stated aspiration of becoming a – **contextually relevant, functionally effective and nationally credible child care and development organization.**

KHW as an organization draws its inspiration from the values advocated by Jesus Christ. We believe that our work is possible because of the goodness that God places in each human heart. And so above all we acknowledge God’s role in blessing and guiding KHW over the past twenty five years. There are some others that deserve special mention – Mr. Hans Juergen Pechmann who remained the single most driving force behind KHW and who deeply loves India and Indians The work of KHW in India, and indeed the whole world, is a direct result of his vision, commitment, hard work and dogged determination.



I would also like to acknowledge the pivotal roles of the late Stephen Hishey and Mrs. Chamzes Wangmo, former heads of KHW. They guided and built KHW in its formative stages and worked very hard to make it what it is today. Supporting and encouraging them have been many members and

board of governors of the Kinderhilfswerk society, KHW staff, volunteers, community representatives, friends, family and individuals. KHW today is the sum total of their hard work and dedication. To all I express gratitude.

The main program of KHW has been to support the education of underprivileged children through sponsorships. Over the two and a half decades this has been attempted in various ways. For many years now one of KHW’s mandates has been providing access to quality education

for the underprivileged. However, many KHW children struggle to do well academically due to a variety of reasons – social, economic, psychological, health, etc. We have tried to address the needs of individual children and their families through appropriate counseling, nutrition & health support, livelihood assistance, tutorials and the like, Nevertheless we still continue to have many children who perform poorly at school and who eventually due to low motivation, disillusionment or family needs drop out and get into low paid jobs or get married, in the case of the girls.

For every child we engage with, I ask myself the question – How has this child’s life changed for the better because of KHW? Sadly many times I have had to confront the bitter truth that we have failed to make a difference.

KHW has had spectacular examples of children rising above their circumstance and doing well. But my concern has always been for those who struggle along in life and never seem to be able to break out of the vice like grip of poverty. I have reluctantly learnt that it is important to know of each individual’s aspirations and to create the right environment for these to be realized. I have learnt that each individual views success in different ways and have learnt the importance of valuing each person’s definition of achievement.

So whilst, I have dreamt that KHW children become lawyers, bureaucrats, judges, doctors, engineers and scientists, I have found that they would rather be barbers, tailors, drivers and mechanics. Some even content to be like their parents – unskilled laborers. Content, perhaps by choice or by circumstance.

It has been a constant challenge of how we as KHW should facilitate the development of young children without creating dependency and compromising the dignity of the child and its family. It is also very important that the communities we engage with do not view KHW as a limitless benevolent provider or cynically as one preying on their misfortunes. We are, and would like to be perceived as facilitators in an individual’s or community’s quest for a better tomorrow.

In the 25th year of KHW, we would like to focus on the “traditionally unsuccessful” children – the school dropouts and those who have chronically resisted every effort to “develop or improve” them. We will

try to see what is it that these young adults are now doing. What is it that really wish to be doing, and how we can help them get to where they want to go.



Vinod Gurung who has been associated with KHW since 1992 is an example – He stubbornly resisted all my efforts to ensure that he at least complete class ten. He would find the most innovative excuses for absenteeism. Even efforts to send him to a driving school were almost impossible. Vinod, is very poor and

otherwise a good boy. During the rainy season you could see him in the river bed gathering sand and gravel to sell. He worked very hard in his free time to help support his family. Later he started working as a driver on a Vikram Loader (Three wheeler cargo carrier). In my rare meetings with him I discovered that what he really dreamed to be was an owner of a Vikram. Many discussions later he is now today a very proud and happy owner, working from early morning to late night, his own boss and a responsible earning member of his family. He comes now to KHW with a confident stride as he regularly pays back the money KHW put into the Vikram. “I know that this money will benefit another Vinod!”.

For young persons like Vinod and as part of its twenty fifth anniversary programs, KHW has introduced a special project – “Micro Enterprise Development & Livelihood Enhancement. Through this program we hope to strengthen individual initiative, aspiration and entrepreneurship. Besides Vinod another young boy Ghulam Ali has been helped through this scheme. Ghulam was provided training by KHW in air conditioning and refrigeration. On his own initiative he managed to get a job in Saudi Arabia but did not have the means to go there. KHW stepped in has enabled him to take a step closer to his dreams. There are many more waiting on the sidelines...

Another emerging KHW initiative is Samvedna – the program for the differently abled. Having been through a two year learning curve, I feel

that Samvedna is now poised to positively influence many more lives especially in the un-served remote mountainous areas of Garhwal. KHW aspires to have a full fledged community based rehabilitation program in the Rudraprayag district and also to replicate Samvedna in at least two additional Garhwal districts in the year 2007-08.

Samvedna is special because of the spirit of volunteerism that it evokes. It stands out as a brilliant example of how people from diverse backgrounds and convictions can get together for a worthy cause. The level of participation and encouragement public, private and community that this program receives in Rudraprayag district is heartening. There is an urgent need for a program like Samvedna. KHW is severely constrained due to a lack of adequate resources and is looking for suitable partners to ensure that the objectives of Samvedna are met effectively and very soon.

One area of emphasis that KHW has fallen behind on is the development of vocational and livelihood skills. Our pilot program JOT (Job Oriented Training) has been discontinued for the time being. JOT had proved very useful for school dropouts and young adults with little or no education as the program provided an opportunity to “learn and earn” through on the job training. Due to restricted capacity and certain other constraints KHW has suspended this program. Quite a few young boys who had gone through this program have started off on their own, or have regular jobs. We are on the look out for partners who can help us better structure and operate this program. It is my sincere hope that this will happen sooner rather than later.

One of KHW’s frustrations has been the long and incomprehensible delay in getting an N.O.C. from the government for the Dehradun Public School, Kandoli (DPS). This limits our ability to fulfill our objective of providing quality education to the poor and marginalized at par with other public schools of Dehradun. KHW’s priority will always be the underprivileged child. We will develop DPS into an institution where even the socio-economically advantaged children will consider it a privilege to attend. By the year 2009 we also hope to start a vocational training program concomitantly with formal education at DPS.

For a very long time KHW has been very concerned about the care of children with no family or community support. In most cases KHW prefers that children stay with their families or in their community as opposed to

in institutions. However, sometimes this is not possible. In the past year KHW has taken tentative steps towards caring for such children through Asha Griha (House of Hope), Vikasnagar and Vatsalya, Tilwara, where children will be brought up in a family environment by parent figures. We hope to develop this program as a replicable model where each unit will be managed by a dedicated couple who have their own children. Each unit will not have more than ten children.



Tsunami Rehabilitation work in Tamilnadu continues. KHW has completed the first phase of construction of houses and will very shortly start the next phase which will extend till May 2008. As a result of our work we have also started a small sponsorship program for children whose both or one parent is HIV positive. This is

a small beginning and we plan to eventually develop a comprehensive care and rehabilitation program for children and families affected by AIDS in Tamilnadu.

I am very happy to inform that KHW has been granted registration under section 80 G of the Income Tax Act 1961. Whilst on the one hand this is a further reaffirmation of KHW's antecedents as a not for profit organization, on the other it opens doors for resident Indians to contribute to KHW's work and also avail tax benefits. One of my challenges is to reduce KHW's dependence on foreign assistance. With a growing sense of Corporate Social Responsibility and increasing affluence in Indian society there are partnership possibilities both individual and corporate. Over the next five years KHW will ensure that a significant part of its funding comes from within the country.

To further highlight twenty five years of service, KHW has planned to introduce two scholarships for residents of Garhwal: One, for professional training of an academically brilliant underprivileged girl, and another for professional training or higher education for a differently abled person. In addition KHW plans to introduce two research fellowships in partnership

with either a university or institution offering Post Graduate studies in Social Work, Sociology and related disciplines. These fellowships will be towards researching socio-economically relevant issues in the state of Uttarakhand.

KHW has traditionally never sought publicity for its work. We have quietly continued with our service and have always believed that our works will speak for us. However, as part of our silver jubilee initiatives we plan to make our work and plans known to a wider audience towards engaging a larger cross section of the populace in our mission. Hence copies of this Ek Prayas will be circulated widely. Our website is also up and is being regularly updated since last year. We are also looking to partner with socially responsible media organizations so that relevant development issues can be brought to the general public's notice on a regular basis.

My larger role in the Asian region continues as the Asian Director for Kinderhilfswerk Stiftung Global Care, Germany. Besides India there are partners / projects in Nepal, Bangladesh and Indonesia. I am grateful that God has enabled me to shoulder this responsibility effectively.

In my work with KHW I have never been content with what has been accomplished, rather I have always looked to what more needs to be done. Nevertheless looking back over twenty five years, I must pause and acknowledge with gratitude our past achievements. Looking ahead at the next twenty five years I see opportunities and challenges in a different, more globalized, but unfortunately an increasingly less equitable and partisan world. Today there is an even greater need for KHW to listen to the voices of the community, to understand their needs and to work tirelessly towards a **"poverty free and just world where all children have equal opportunity and access to develop their God given potential"**.

Thank you very much. As always it has been a privilege.

Respectfully submitted,

Jaywant Pratap Singh
Secretary / Director
Kinderhilfswerk Society
May 2007