

Enable

(Working in India)

NEWS UPDATE No 19 SUMMER 2006

Registered Charity No 1053560



Enable and our Children Betrayed: Not a Child in Sight at the Enable Centre in Ongole (15 June 2006)

ENABLE BETRAYED

Dear Friends,

We had anticipated that this News Update would highlight the celebrations on 8 January 2006, of the opening of the new *Enable* Centre (above). Sadly, those happy days now seem to be a distant memory. *Enable* currently has a very difficult problem, having discovered it has been betrayed by the Director in India, Fr Gali Arulraj, in whom we had put our trust.

Enable was set up in 1995, at the explicit request of Fr Gali Arulraj, to assist him in his work for disabled children. He presented himself as a dedicated priest, committed to serving the needs of disabled children. At first, being a parish priest, he was only working part-time for the disabled children, but he informed us, in 1997, that his bishop had given him permission to devote himself full-time to working for disabled children. *Enable*

trusted him because he was a priest, but also fulfilled its proper responsibilities in scrutinizing expenditure as presented in the certified accounts of the charitable society set up by Fr Arulraj—the Dayananda Nilayam Society for Social Development (DNSSD)—with which we worked in partnership for the disabled children.

Discovering the deception

In February 2006 *Enable* received information that the chartered accountant who had certified the DNSSD accounts, Mr P.V. Ranganadham of Ongole, had falsely certified the accounts of a different organisation. In view of our responsibility of safeguarding donations from our supporters, *Enable's* trustees judged it prudent to seek a verification of the DNSSD accounts.

I visited Ongole at the end of April to verify the

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DNSSD accounts, and discovered some serious anomalies. Accounts statements referred to loans taken and repaid that did not exist. Large amounts of cash were being withdrawn from the bank—totalling more than £90,000 at one point—for no obvious reason. There was evidence of a hidden bank account.

On my return from India, *Enable's* trustees asked for an independent audit of the DNSSD accounts. This was refused. Finally, *Enable* received notice (on 31 May 2006), that at an alleged “general body meeting” of 25 May, the DNSSD had passed two resolutions. One specified that “no body is allowed to inspect the books of account” and the other specified that the centres in India would not re-open (contrary to our expectations) when the Indian summer holidays ended on 12 June.

Arulraj asked to resign

The information was accompanied by a disgraceful email to Alison Davis, from Fr Arulraj, in which he unjustly heaped blame and incrimination upon her. At this point, with the unanimous agreement of *Enable's* trustees, I wrote to Fr Arulraj, asking him and those responsible for the resolutions passed on 25 May to resign, thereby allowing us to work with responsible people.

At about this time, I also heard from Bishop P.C. Balaswamy, the bishop of Nellore, who had ordained Arulraj a priest in 1981. Contrary to Arulraj's assertions, the bishop had not permitted him to carry out his work. Infact, since 1997, Arulraj had separated himself from the bishop and the diocese, contrary to the oath of obedience he had made to that bishop when he was ordained. He was not in communion with his bishop or his Church. He was, in fact, a renegade priest.

Arulraj's purchase of private houses

From different sources, *Enable* discovered that Arulraj has bought two private houses—one in Ongole (close to the centres) and another far away in Bangalore. These are assumed to be purchased with funds he stole from *Enable*, and the police are currently investigating this. Until June, nobody in *Enable* had any idea that Arulraj had mistresses as well as children for whom these houses have apparently been bought. Arulraj pretended to be a practising priest, but we did not know that his ‘priestly’ life has been a sham for a number of years.



Gali Arulraj: betrayed *Enable* and the children

The vindictiveness of Arulraj

If Arulraj had had any decency, he would have resigned as soon as his deception and theft were uncovered. Because *Enable* was and is primarily concerned about the needs of the children, we even offered him an amnesty—we gave an assurance that we would not take action against him—provided that he would leave the centres and let us continue our work for the children without hindrance.

I visited India from 10th to 20th June. Children returning for the new school year (beginning 12th June) had been turned away. About 12 girls were at one of our centres, but the *Enable* Centre, opened in January, was completely locked up. Accompanied by representatives of Bishop Balaswamy, I tried to meet Arulraj on 15 June to resolve matters peacefully. I discovered that he had already filed a civil lawsuit (on 13 June) to prevent *Enable* from ‘interfering’ with our own projects!

Since then he has written two letters to *Enable's* sponsors (dated 11 June and 13 July) making all sorts of wild accusations that can be easily proven to be untrue (see p. 3). Serious threats have been made, and many attempts to intimidate me and others working for justice on *Enable's* behalf in India. Arulraj has taken legal action not only against me, but also against his own bishop and an elderly senior priest (the vicar general) in his diocese who peacefully tried to help resolve matters.

Police action taken against Arulraj

On 17 June I personally presented to the Superintendent of Police, in Ongole, a complaint against Arulraj and his nephew, also a priest, Fr V. Paulinraj, who was implicated in

the theft of *Enable's* funds. Immediately the two men absconded and were on the run from the police for four weeks.

Arulraj and Paulinraj turned themselves in to the police on about 13 July. On 15 July, they were summoned to appear before the Superintendent of Police, at which meeting I was present. The police are investigating them for "cheating" and "misappropriation of foreign funds." Arulraj effectively admitted his guilt when he offered to repay any missing money.

***Enable's* resolve to achieve justice**

Instead of putting the needs of the children first, Arulraj is now trying to prevent *Enable* from continuing its work for the children. Unless *Enable* ensures that civil and criminal action is taken against Arulraj and others who have conspired with him, we will be unable to assist the children. *Enable* is committed to doing everything possible for the good of the children, and we will not be deterred by threats or offensive lies.

Enable's News Updates often acknowledged the excellent work that has been achieved for the children by *Enable/DNSSD* under the Directorship of Gali Arulraj. Having discovered the breach of trust by Arulraj, *Enable's* trustees are dismayed by his vindictive hostility. *Enable's* trustees feel utterly betrayed by him. His malevolence and ingratitude towards Alison Davis—the main inspiration for setting up *Enable*, who loves the children dearly, as though they were her own—is a particularly bitter, personal betrayal.

Most of all, however, Arulraj's actions are a betrayal of the children themselves. We are determined to ensure that justice is achieved for the children. This will be time-consuming and expensive, but failure to act would mean everything we have hitherto achieved in India falls into ruin. At this difficult time for *Enable*, we especially value your support.

With gratitude for all your support,
Colin Harte

Letters with shameful lies

Enable is forwarding copies of the letters Arulraj has sent to sponsors (dated 11 June and 13 July) to the Indian police. The blatant lies in the letters are further evidence of his deception and cheating.

Arulraj's lies are offensive, but also stupid. Here are details of just some of them:

* Arulraj claimed that the problem is not with the accounts of his own Dayananda Nilayam Society but with *Enable's* accounts. In June, *Enable* informed the UK Charity Commission of our problem with Arulraj. The Commission declared it is satisfied that we have informed the police in India and are taking steps to recover missing funds. *Enable* has expressed its willingness to submit its records to any investigation, knowing that it can fully account for all income and expenditure.

* Arulraj claimed that the problem started when he asked *Enable* to submit our accounts to him. The chain of events is clear from a lengthy exchange of correspondence which was started by *Enable* in February. Arulraj's request for *Enable* to submit its accounts was first made in a letter dated 26 May, weeks after *Enable's* request for an independent audit of the accounts in India was refused.

* Arulraj claimed that his bishop misinformed Colin Harte about the house bought in Bangalore in recent months. It was not a private house, says Arulraj, but bought in his Society's name. If this is the case, why is there no record of it in the Statement of Accounts of the Dayananda Nilayam Society for the year ending March 2006? Why is there also no record in the financial books of the private house bought in Ongole for Arulraj's mistress and children, which actually was registered in the name of his Society?

* Arulraj claimed that, leading a team of about 40 policemen, Colin Harte raided the centres on 22 June 2006, and that the children are still in shock or have fled as a result of various "atrocities." The mundane truth—which is a matter of police record—is that when a few police officers went to apprehend Arulraj the centres were locked up and neither Arulraj nor the children were present. Colin Harte took part in no raid on any date. On 22 June he was in England.

Arulraj's lies are offensive and despicable. Most shamefully, he also presented them in a letter (dated 13 July) allegedly written by the children, pleading for help for themselves and their "loving father Gali Arulraj." This cowardly and cynical exploitation of the children for his own benefit is the very opposite of what one would expect from a "loving father."

Information for Sponsors

On 23 June 2006, Colin Harte wrote to sponsors, informing them of our present difficulties with Gali Arulraj. Apart from about 12 older girls in one centre, the children had not been readmitted to the centres at the beginning of the new school year (12 June). Colin visited India again in July, when—with the help of Bishop Balaswamy of Nellore who has offered *Enable* every support—he hoped to resume care and support for the children abandoned by Arulraj.

The press and TV took much interest in Colin's July visit to India. There was a lot of coverage on 8 July about Arulraj's misappropriation of funds and his abandonment of the children. In response Arulraj arranged, on 8 and 9 July, for about 100 physically disabled and blind children to be bussed into the centres so that he could deny this to the media.

Arulraj's exploitation of children

Because DNSSD has no funds to continue supporting the children, the children will be only temporarily at the centres. Arulraj's abandonment of the children—apart from the exploitative recall of them to gain publicity—is shameful. If he were concerned about the children, he would do the decent thing and resign so that *Enable* can continue to support the children who badly need our care.

Enable's suspension of activities

When *Enable* learned that Arulraj had temporarily bussed in some of the children to the centres, our trustees took the decision that it was best not to try to arrange alternative accommodation for the children. Threats have

been made against Colin and others who have been helping *Enable* to achieve justice. We believe the physical and mental well-being of both staff and children would be at risk if we were to establish temporary accommodation while Arulraj is creating so much unrest. All things considered, we think the children are safer staying with their families than being exposed to danger in a conflict situation.

Sponsorship donations

Sponsors of children at the New Life Centre in Chennai have been sent a letter about the situation there. For children in the Ongole Centres, all sponsorship donations received by 11 April 2006 have been forwarded to India. Sponsorship donations received since 12 April remain in *Enable's* bank account.

Sadly, we do not know how long it will be before *Enable* is again able to care for the children and regain possession of our institutions. At the moment, sponsorship donations cannot be used. In view of this, we advise sponsors to cancel their standing orders and to suspend sponsorship donations until further notice.

Accompanying this Update is a form for sponsors, inviting them to receive a refund of donations made since 12 April 2006. Instead of this, sponsors may, if they wish, authorize *Enable* to use those donations in order to finance the legal action and other expenses being incurred in India as we try to ensure that the future of *Enable's* work for the children can continue. Alternatively, they may authorize *Enable* to use those donations to help other projects for disabled children in India.

Enable (Working in India)

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Enable (Working in India) is a registered charity (no. 1053560), set up to support disabled children in India. All donations have always been sent in their entirety to India. Administration and other costs, including flights to India to monitor projects, have always been paid from donations made by *Enable's* trustees and others for these purposes. **Please make cheques payable to "Enable."**