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National Committees and Departments

Committee for International Pioneering and Travel Teaching

CAN YOU CREDIT IT; here we are approaching the end of the first year of the Five Year Plan already, the first plan of the new epoch announced so joyfully by the Universal House of Justice. Does it seem to flash by as fast for you as for us? Does it appear to you that the days of your life are indeed fleeting by faster and faster as the momentum for change in both the Major Plan of God and the Bahá'í Plan gathers pace?

It certainly seems to have been a very momentous year in the world as a whole, with a greater than ever awareness of the fragility of life, a growing world consciousness that no part of the Earth is exempt from the forces tearing down the old world order, putting us all through a crucible of conflict, fear and uncertainty, in preparation for the new dawn.

Does the prospect that we are on the verge of something momentous excite you? It is a bit like the feeling you get as you reach the top of the long pull up to the start of the big dipper at the fairground, as you are about to swoop dizzily and heart in mouth down the terrifyingly steep drop on an impossibly narrow rail and you know that there are lots of ups and downs ahead for everybody on board but you know you will make it to the end of the ride, happy and exhilarated to have come through in one piece.

Are you on board? Can you feel the excitement yet? Can you feel the urgency? Even if the pace and speed of the pioneering and travel teaching big dipper ride seem too much for you personally, you can do what typically our parents used to do, pay for someone to get up and go in your stead. That's called "deputisation" and is a wonderful gesture to allow an otherwise willing but materially restricted soul to serve and sustain humanity on its precarious and perilous ride into its glorious future.

As we prepare ourselves mentally and spiritually to enter the period of the Fast, in a spirit of dedication, let us remember those soul stirring words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

"O that I could travel, even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions, and, raising the call of 'Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá' in cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, promote the Divine teachings! This, alas, I cannot do. How intensely I deplore it! Please God, ye may achieve it."

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Tablets of the Divine Plan, No 7, para. 8)

You can get in touch with the CIPTT through the secretary,
Peymane Adab, email: [removed as no longer relevant]

The CIPTT have received the following communication:

The National Spiritual Assembly of Bulgaria urgently needs a pioneer to move to the beautiful city of Blagoevgrad, in southern Bulgaria. The city is situated 100Km south of Sofia, the capital. It is the home of the American University and has a population of about 60,000. The University has long been established as the foremost third-level institution in the country. All degree courses are conducted through the English language.

Academic inquiries can be made to www.aubg.bg [no longer available 20020722]

Other inquiries can be made to the National Bahá'í Centre, email: [removed as no longer relevant]

or to the co-ordinator for pioneers, Joseph Donnelly, email: [removed as no longer relevant]

Bahá'í Office for Social and Economic Development

Basic requirements for setting up a Bahá'í SED project

THE FOLLOWING notes are taken from some guidelines compiled by Hassan Sabri, the first Director of the Office for Social and Economic Development at the Bahá'í World Centre. We hope they will be helpful to communities considering embarking on a project. If we can be of any further assistance we will be very pleased to hear from you. The project should:

- emanate from the grass roots level and address an immediate and pressing need
- be welcomed by the Bahá'ís in the area (not imposed by anyone)
- be suited to the capacities and resources of the local Bahá'í community (including manpower, finances and time) and of the local community
- be based on consultation at all levels
- seek to foster the self-respect and dignity of those whom it serves
- be based on appropriate ideas and technologies for the local environment and culture, and for the capacities and experiences of the people the project is intended to serve
- be consistent with the aims of local and national civil authorities
- be simple, sustainable and manageable, with well-defined aims, sound business practices and written agreements (if several parties are involved)
- seek to harness the energy and idealism of Bahá'í youth
- be managed by trustworthy individuals
- involve women and other disadvantaged groups wherever possible

Bahá'í Office for Social and Economic Development

Secretary: Susie Howard, email: boosed@bahai.org.uk

Asia Sub Continent Committee

FACT: one in six of the world's population is of Asian origin – by this we mean having origins in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, or Sri Lanka.

The Asia Sub Continent Committee was set up by the UK National Assembly to support anyone wanting to work with the Asian communities in the UK. Your activities might include visiting your local Hindu, Jain, Buddhist or Muslim house of worship. You may be involved with Interfaith in your area. You may have been invited to the Hindu celebrations of Diwali in November or the Muslim celebration of Eid. You may want to invite your Asian friends and contacts to your community's Naw Rúz party. You yourself could be of Asian origin but have not had the chance to talk about the Bahá'í Faith to people of your background. Many Bahá'ís simply have Asian friends to whom they would like to talk about the Bahá'í Faith in a way which would be relevant to Asian culture.

On Saturday, December 1, members of the Asia Sub Continent Committee travelled to a consultation hosted by Leicester community. The friends attending believed that a deepening on the essential aspects of Hinduism would be of great interest and help to anyone who is part of or has contact with the Asian community.

Our next meeting is going to be held in Leicester on Saturday, February 23, 2002 from 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm. The address is Friends Meeting Place, Queens Road, off Victoria Park Road, Leicester.

There will be a deepening on “Reincarnation, Hinduism and the Bahá'í Faith” given by Mr Vijay, followed by discussion. We will be talking about how to organise and get support for Bahá'í events working with the Asian communities throughout the whole of the UK. There

will be food and refreshments – plus Indian songs if we're lucky.

Everyone interested is welcome – even if they haven't begun activities with the Asian communities yet.

If you would like more details about the event, how to get there, or more details about the Asia Sub Continent Committee, please contact the following people:

Nassrin Afán, Email: [removed as no longer relevant]

Nita Foroughi, Email: [removed as no longer relevant]

Renoo Zaiwalla, Email: [removed as no longer relevant]

Hope to see you there!

Asia Sub Continent Committee

Children's Bahá'í Education Service

Are you in or are you out?

DEAR FRIENDS,

The Children's Bahá'í Education Service is updating its Directory of Children's Classes. Please help by taking a moment to check whether or not you are included in this list and if you are, check that the contact names are correct. The CBES would be most grateful for your co-operation in this task. There are 16 community schools throughout the U.K., but much larger numbers of children's classes which may cater for as many as 15 or as few as 2. By nature these are very changeable in their make-up but it is important to have the current list updated. Many agencies of the National Spiritual Assembly find the CBES Directory of Community Schools (CSs) and Children's Classes (CCs) very useful for various reasons.

Grateful thanks for your time,
The Children's Bahá'í Education Service

Barnet: Mrs J. Alae, Birmingham: Mrs Violet Owen, Burnley: Mr James Heaton, Cambridge: Mrs Khatereh Zavareh, Colchester: Mrs Angela Tidswell, Congleton: Mrs Julie Thompson, Glasgow: Mrs Sholeh Forsyth, Hayle: Ms Michaela Smith, Isle of Skye: Ms Sarah Stephens, Kettering: Mr Russell Attwood, Lancaster: Mrs Margaret Fuscoe, Leicester: Ms Jan Macdonald, Lincolnshire: Mr John Dunthorne, Liverpool: Mrs Pauline Samson, Llandrindod Wells: Mrs Joan Mannion, Manchester: Mrs Irene Rawling, Newport: Mr Munis Abbas, Oxford: Mrs Kathy McGee-Nickjoo, Preston: Mrs Penny Craig, Shropshire: Ms Denise Samari, Wakefield: Mrs E. Mitchell.

Please notify the CBES if you should be on this list. Also let us know if the contact person is incorrect. Please send all details to Mrs Mitali Peckham at mitali@mpeckham.freeserve.co.uk

