

Tibetan children's Village, Upper Dharamsala



After His Holiness the Dalai Lama's flight to India in 1950, it was quickly apparent that one of the most critical needs of Tibetan refugees was finding a means to care for the many children who had been orphaned or separated from their families during the arduous escape from their homeland. His Holiness promptly recognized that the future of Tibet and its people depended upon the younger generation. With this in mind and out of concern for the miserable conditions under which so many children were suffering, His Holiness proposed that a center for destitute children be established in Dharamsala.

On 17 May 1960, fifty-one children arrived from the road construction camps in Jammu, ill and malnourished. Mrs. Tsering Dolma Takla, the elder sister of His Holiness, volunteered to look after them. Initially these children were assigned to members of the Dalai Lama's entourage, but before long the Government of India offered its assistance, renting Conium House to accommodate all the children together. At that time, the center was under the name "Nursery for Tibetan Refugee Children".

Originally, the Nursery for Tibetan Refugee Children provided only the basic care for children as they were sent to other residential schools established by the Government of India when they more mature. But eventually this arrangement could not be continued, as all the residential schools became filled to capacity. This left the Nursery to find a solution to problem of overcrowding. Under Mrs. Jetsun Pema, the then Director, it was decided that the Nursery had to grow and expand despite many apparent obstacles.

A massive reorganization plan was set into motion. This included seeking help from private donors and international aid organizations. A period of hectic construction work ensued to provide for more houses and classrooms for children. The Nursery slowly took the shape of a small village with its own school and homes. This children's village is what is called today as the Upper TCV School at Dharamsala with over 2409 students on roll. The school offers its students the option of either enrolling for science or Humanities stream in the senior secondary level. There are over 341 teaching and non-teaching staff under its current Principal Mr. Tenzin Sangpo.