



March 2008

Dear Friends,

Asha Deep Vidyashram is gearing up for its 4th Annual Spring Celebration. The program will be held on March 8 between 5-9 pm. We've got a number of items scheduled including songs, dances, jokes, poems, juggling, and dramas. I also will be giving my Principal's Speech -- in Hindi. If you pray, please pray for these last days of preparation:

- that none of the kids (especially those with main parts) would get sick
- that preparations for the stage, lights, sound, decorations, and food would go smoothly
- that there won't be tension between the people supervising and setting up
- that the kids enjoy the program and their parts in it
- that the parents and other attendees enjoy the program and understand the messages we are trying to give
- that I have the chance and energy to greet everyone properly
- that we receive good press coverage

More parents than ever are planning to come; we are expecting about 350 people.

I have one more item for prayer, this one for a specific student. Chandu, a 14 year old, has been studying in the school for two years. He is one of our brightest stars: intelligent, friendly, diligent. He has been trying very hard to improve his situation in life. I am very proud of him and had hopes of him going on to university. About one week ago, he informed me that he will not be coming to the school after our Spring Celebration. I was in shock. Obviously something had happened to him that day. I sat with him for a long time trying to figure out what the problem was, but he would not say anything. I feel quite sure that whatever happened did not happen at school. I later heard he had been beaten at home. I thought that maybe after a week, things might settle down and he would change his mind, but yesterday he said that he was still planning to leave. If he were planning to go to another school, I would not be as upset, but he is planning to quit school altogether.

I will need to talk to him at least one more time before the program. I feel certain that he is planning to run away to a relative's home. But I need to make sure he understands how special he is and that he knows he can come back and get help later if he needs to. And also I need to try one more time to convince him to stay in school. Please pray that this talk with Chandu will go well, that he will open up and talk to me. It's hard to talk to someone when you don't really know what the root issues are.

My stomach is in knots just thinking about Chandu. Our annual day program promises to be a good one; everyone is looking forward to it. But knowing that it will be Chandu's last day with us brings a very dark cloud.

love,

Connie