

# NAYANTARA MEMORIAL CHARITABLE TRUST

## Sonali Hansda

Sonali Hansda is an orphan girl of Jambuni village who used to live with her maternal grandparents. Economic compulsions and social practices forced the little Sonali to attend to all domestic works like cooking and washing besides going to the fields to earn, even though she was only a class VI student. Sonali had a younger brother whom she had to take care off in absence of their parents. She was one of the first 3 students who had joined the Supportive Education Centre started by Nayantara in August 2008. Over the years she was found to be most regular of the students averaging over 90% attendance at our centre. In 2010 her brother got admitted to a residential school run by a Philanthropic organization in Kolkata.



With no one to care for, the young Sonali would live in a world of her own. She was very sensitive and valued her self respect. She refused to accept any special favours. One day she was found without a pen in the class. She was offered one by Nayantara. She used the pen in the class and returned it before going home. When told to keep it, she refused to accept. She would only take something if it was also given to others. There were days when she would come to the centre well before the class times in the morning. On one of such days she was found to be pale and sick. She refused to speak a word. The volunteers came to know from her friends that she had had no food since lunch the previous day. Her grandparents had fought, her grand mother had left for her parents' house, while her grand father lay drunk. Her house was locked and she had no keys. She had spent the previous night in the open and on day break had come to Nayantara. When she was offered food she refused to take it. After lot of counseling she ate.

Nayantara was worried in the way things were going as little Sonali was getting physiologically effected. So in 2011 she was sent to a residential school in Purulia. Her expenses were sponsored by the Trust. In 2014 she passed Madhyamik exams and came home. Within days of coming she came to Nayantara at Raipur where the volunteers stay. When she left for Purulia, Nayantara operated from a 2 room rented place. The 150 year old Raipur building was donated to Nayantara after her going to Purulia and since mid 2011 it has been the home for the volunteers of the Trust. Sonali was visiting Raipur for the first time. She refused to go back home or to Purulia as she felt Nayantara was her home. We could not say no though we were not in a position to residentially keep a child and that too a girl.

As luck would have it she got selected for the one year assistant nursing Sahayika Sevika course at Matri Bhavan Hospital of Ramakrishna Sarada Mission in Kolkata through an open test. She had appeared for a "Dusta Medhavi" Scholarship exam conducted by the Institute of Culture, Ramakrishna Mission in Kolkata. Of the 150 students from Birbhum who took the test she was one of the 45 to qualify for this one time scholarship of Rs.2000/- Sonali is presently doing her Sahayika Sevika course in Kolkata along with 4 other students of the Trust.

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For Sonali Nayantara Trust remains her guardian. We feel honoured to get this privilege.