



### NEW CLASSROOMS PRESENTED TO BARHI NEWADA SCHOOL

10. April 2008 was special to the RUGMARK School at Barhi Newada (Varanasi). Its new classrooms were inaugurated. Mr. Ram Chandra Maurya, Director, RUGMARK Foundation and Mr. Fred Keller unveiled the plaque and presented the new classrooms to the children. Mr. Keller had visited the RM School several times during his business trips to India. In his last visit, he made a contribution of 900 Euros to help construct additional classrooms. He expressed happiness and congratulated the RM staff and the landlord, Mr. Daya Ram Gupta, for making the classrooms ready in a very short period.

As the guests arrived, the school children welcomed them in a traditional way. The children presented lively cultural programmes. Everyone present at the occasion applauded to the variety of songs, dance and short-plays presented by the children. The foreign visitors said that the performances of the children were of a professional level. And for the moment they forgot that they were among the village school children.

RUGMARK Directors, Mr. Parvez Suleman and Mr. Kamal Kathuria, were also present at the occasion. They thanked the RUGMARK importers and congratulated Dr. Kebschull and Mrs. Sharda Subramaniam for the progress which the RUGMARK initiative has achieved so far.

Dr. Kebschull, the founder of the RUGMARK initiative, in his address thanked Dr. Heller, Mr. Carsten Grassau, Mr. Oliver Babji, the representatives of Otto Group and Mr. Keller for giving their valuable time for RM children, despite their business schedule. He praised the children and their teachers for presenting nice cultural programmes and wished them all the success and a very bright future. Dr. Heller from Otto Versand, Germany conveyed his good wishes to the children and the staff. He read out a message from Mr. C.D. Schmidt who was earlier in charge for Otto's carpet business and handed over a cheque as a token of their love to RM children.

Mrs. Sharda Subramaniam, the Managing Director of RUGMARK Foundation, thanked the visitors and congratulated the children and RUGMARK staff for organizing the function in a nice way. She said that under the guidance of RUGMARK Chairperson Mrs. Maneka Gandhi and with valued support of the RM importers and exporters, RUGMARK will continue to create more opportunities of schooling for the children.

### MARKET TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CARPET INDUSTRY

India is the world leader in carpet exports. It has a share of 36 percent in the global market. Exports of carpets had increased from US\$ 654.32 million in 2004-05 to US\$ 930.69 million in 2006-07, showing a growth of 42.23 percent. There has been a decline in demand for traditional hand knotted carpets which could be attributed to the changing economic scenario in the world and to changing taste and fashion. Nevertheless low end

carpets like hand-tufted carpets and elegant shaggy rugs are currently driving the growth of carpet industry. The decreasing demand for hand-knotted carpets is gradually being replaced by the increasing demand for these types of carpets. Moreover, the hand-tufted and shaggy rugs have expanded the carpet market; because they are cheaper and more affordable for many consumers. The significant increase in income levels of lesser developed countries and middle classes can further expand the carpet market. The hand-tufted carpet and shaggy rug manufacturers can easily use modern designs to attract young consumers. Therefore exploring the new markets can provide opportunities to capture a greater share of global market

India is the world leader in the export of woven cotton rugs "trasmattor". India along with China, Nepal and Pakistan collectively holds about 60% of the global carpet market.

Mr. Kamal Kathuria (Director-RM) carpet exporter and owner of Concept Creations says: "If we create our own product line as per the requirement of the consumers there is a huge market waiting to be tapped by India. Although oriental carpets have a market in USA the trend is shifting towards high end carpets. The American consumer is looking for natural fibers other than wool like sea grass, hemp, banana fibers, bamboo yarn etc. in bright and modern shades. Similarly, the European customer has shifted to low end carpets and elegant shaggy rugs with emphasis on man made fiber like nylon and acrylic. It is only England that keeps to the basics and still prefers the oriental and the traditional wool carpets. So if we design and plan our collection keeping in mind the mood of the market the productivity and exports will definitely get a boost."

To adjust itself with the emerging market trends, manufacturers in the carpet-belt of eastern Uttar Pradesh, traditionally famous for its elegant hand-knotted carpets, have given more emphasis to hand-tufted and shaggy rugs. Still it has immense potential for meeting the demand for hand-knotted carpet.

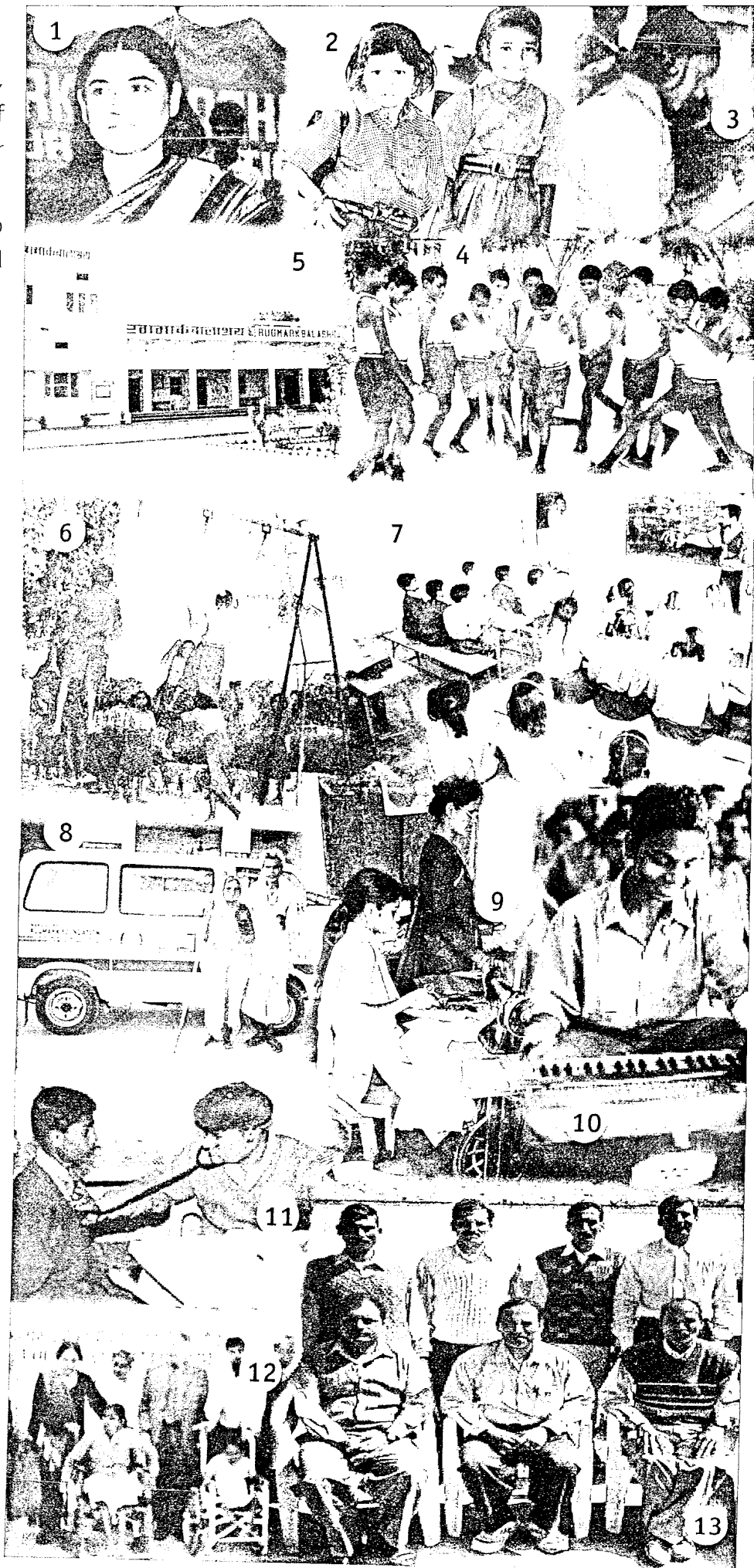
In India other famous handmade carpet manufacturing and exporting belts, viz. Rajasthan (Jodhpur, Bikaner), J & K (Jammu, Srinagar), Haryana (Panipat), Gujarat (Valsad), need to be geared up for enhancement in the world market of carpets in general and of hand knotted carpets in particular. This would result in improvement in the socio-economic status of the trade in general and of artisans' community in particular.

Many industry players like Mr. Mahesh Ohri (Director RM), a carpet exporter and the owner of **MO**, a showroom in Gurgaon showcasing carpets, rugs, floor coverings and other home textile products think that Indian market will expand rapidly. This, he says, is due to the current retail boom in India. It can become a regular demand for the Indian carpet manufacturers.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has given a fillip to traditional sectors with international potential. In the case of the carpet weavers of Rajasthan, it has not upgraded skills and designs, but has in a way also boosted revenues. Especially Computer Aided Designs (CAD) and Computer Aided

## RUGMARK : in Pictures

1. Mrs. Maneka Gandhi, Chairperson, RUGMARK Foundation and Member of Parliament of India and Former Minister, Government of India
2. The little girls ready to go to RUGMARK School with a smile and curiosity on their faces
3. Focus on girl education.
4. RUGMARK Balashraya: a rehabilitation centre for the children released from carpet weaving
5. Children at RM Balashraya: play time
6. Children at one of the RUGMARK School, taking turns to swing.
7. A class in progress at RM School: a better place than the carpet looms.
8. A Mobile Medical Van equipped with basic health facilities and a qualified and experienced Doctor provides basic health facilities to the children of RUGMARK Schools and the villagers.
9. RM students attending a tailoring class
10. Music class at RM Balashraya.
11. Medical check-up by a qualified and experienced Doctor (Physician)
12. Dr. D. Keshchull and Mrs. Sharda Subramaniam presenting wheel-chairs and tri-cycles to polio-affected children in a camp organized by RUGMARK.
13. Headmasters of RUGMARK schools and Manager-RM Balashraya: left to right (sitting): Mr. Pradeep Shukla, Mr. Ghanshyam Maurya, Mr. Sant Lal Prajapati; (standing): Mr. Vijay Nath Prasad, Mr. Anand Kumar Singh, Mr. Subhash Chand Yadav, Mr. Ram Dhani Yadav





**In Pictures:** 1. Inauguration of new classes at Barhi Newada School: (Front row L to R) Dr. D. Kebschull , Mr. Ram Chandra Maurya, Mr. Parvez Suleman (RM Directors) second row, Guest from Otto Group, Germany, Mr. Oliver Babji, Dr. Heller, Mr. Carsten Grassau. 2. Mr. Fred Keller (RM importer) reading a book in the class-room with RM children, (Front row left back row) and other RM Directors and visitors from Otto Group and others. 3. Mrs. Sharda Subramaniam (RM Managing Director) and Mr. Daya Ram Gupta of Sunder Carpet industries along with RM students. 4 RM Directors, RM importers and RM staff pose for a photograph, while Mr. Keller and Mr. Babji hold the RUGMARK logo. 5. Mrs. Sharda Subramaniam (MD RUGMARK Foundation) addressing the gathering. 6. Mr. Nasser Rahmanan (US importer) and Mr. Mahesh Ohri (RM Director) being given a traditional welcome by RM children in RM School Cherapur 7. Rani Verma, former RM student who accidentally lost one of her arms speaks about her determination to move ahead in life with the motivation provided by RM staff addressing the gathering. 8. Children enjoying the cultural programme. 9. Students performing a short-play. 10 Mr. Rahamanan, President Masterloom Inc. USA pose for a photograph with the RM children. 11. A colourful dance performance 12 We are the children of RM.



## RUGMARK FOUNDATION

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## NEWSLETTER

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Machining (CAM), has ushered in a wider array of designs and improved productivity. ICT addressed the entire value chain of the industry in terms of design, production, marketing and presentation of the range of designs. In short, the carpet dealers could examine the potential designs. The weavers could experiment. And the time to produce and market can be reduced with the end product meeting the consumer demands.

### SOCIAL AUDITS FOR CARPET SECTOR

'Social audit of labour-intensive industries soon'. This was announced by Mr. Jairam Ramesh, Union Minister of State for Commerce during a two day buyer-seller meet on carpets. The Indian government is planning to conduct social audits of labour-intensive industries, such as carpet and handicrafts, every year. The industries for which social audits will be undertaken include carpets, apparel, gems and jewellery, handicrafts and sports goods.

#### Steps to compliance audit

1. Introductory workshop - Concept, Working Results
2. Initial Audits - Assessment of Current Scenario
3. Formulation of Corrective Action Plan (CAP)
4. Re- Audits - Conformance to CAP
5. Final Audits - Declaration of results
6. Certification of Compliance

The IGEP Foundation along with RUGMARK has always taken a lead role in promoting exports from India and taking effective counter measures to prevent damage to manufacturing and exports. Since long, we are already working with many big

German buyers towards assisting their suppliers in India in implementing the improvement through using the "International Social and Environment Standards (ISES)" concept at their work-sites. The ISES standard is in line with SA 8000 and ISO 14000 standards, and is strictly following the laws of India. *The idea is not to rank companies as good or bad, but to assist companies to achieve the desirable standards.*

IGEP Foundation is an ISES 2000 certified body. It has received an accreditation for ISES 2020 recently. This has been a big step forward for us as we are offering social and environmental consultancy since the last two decades. IGEP has functioned in a partnership approach and has been carrying out auditing assignments as an integral part of export promotion.

The fields covered under the ISES standard are: health & safety at work place, freedom of association, working hours, compensation, environment protection etc.

The audits are done hand-in hand with the entrepreneurs. The basic first audit lasts normally only one day. Then according to the situation an adjustment and Corrective Action Plan is developed. IGEP/RUGMARK advises what is to be done and a time plan is agreed. Then follows a re-audit. If things are ok a certificate is given. It is thus a process and not an event.

These audits are not aimed to give a company a certificate of "passed" or "not passed". The idea is of a constructive co-operation, where ways are found jointly to make necessary changes for strengthening international competitiveness by improving working conditions.

### RUGMARK – A JOURNEY CALLED LIFE

Success to us at RUGMARK does not mean the number of children we are able to free from being child labourers but the way in which they blossom and face the real world once they pass out from Balashraya and RM schools.

Children like Raj Kumar, Meen Bahadur and Manoj Ray symbolize the victory of man against all diversities if provided with the right guidance and will to succeed. All three had been freed from looms by RUGMARK inspectors and brought to Balashraya, the rehabilitation centre. Their perseverance has helped them get back to life with Raj Kumar establishing his own tailoring shop in his village, Manoj Ray working as a school teacher and Meen Bahadur working in Delhi after completing his schooling and a diploma in travel and tourism.

The cut throat competition in today's world has not deterred the students of the RUGMARK schools from performing and excelling at academics, sports and extra curricular activities.

Like in the previous years, this year too the children from RUGMARK schools have performed well in their annual exams with 95% of the students passing the examination with good grades.

Rani Verma, a young girl handicapped with no limbs, passed her class tenth board examination with a first division. The story of this girl, an epitome of courage and determination, moved the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh. He sanctioned one lakh rupees (about US\$ 2500) from The Prime Minister's Discretionary Fund as financial assistance.

When faced with hardships in life, many people just give up. But these children have shown to the world that life has to be enjoyed come what may.

Balashraya student Mukesh has tried to put his past to rest and move ahead, finding solace in painting. This hobby has won him accolades and prizes in the state.

RUGMARK students have excelled at sports meets not only at the regional level but also the state level. Indramani Bind, a student of Balashraya, was declared the best athlete and Pintoo Yadav secured the third position in 100 meters and 200 meters race at the Uttar Pradesh State Level Athletic Event held in Saharanpur from 17 to 19 November, 2007. Reema, Neetu, Kamlesh and Mulayam, four students from the RUGMARK school participated in the Uttar Pradesh State Level Athletic meet. Mulayam was awarded the gold medal in the 400meters race while Reema secured the second position and was awarded the silver medal.

Thus, the smiles on the faces of these children and their success in life inspire us to keep working and contributing to this society in whatever little way we can.

### RUGMARK CARPETS IN NCR

#### Where should we buy RUGMARK Carpets in NCR?

This was the question that was asked every now and then. A lot of carpet showrooms keep RM Carpets. But the National Capital Region welcomed a showroom with a dedicated section on RUGMARK carpets.

Do visit the place given below;  
**Goel Exports S-443, School Block, Shakarpur, New Delhi**