



Six Year Old Child Needs Your Help

In early December 2009, the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Association (JELA) sponsored free heart check-ups for the people in the village of Jamkhed, India. Dr. Masaaki Takeuchi, a cardiologist from Fukuoka, traveled to India to carry out the heart examinations. During his time in India, Dr. Takeuchi used an echocardiogram that was recently purchased through a grant provided by the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). During a one week period, over a hundred people between ages of six and eighty years old received care. Individuals traveled more than eight hours to receive the free check-ups.

Among the many people examined was a six year old girl named Vaishnavi. Born in the remote village of Pachangi, Vaishnavi enjoys playing with her friends and coloring. She hides her shyness with her radiant smile and high pitched giggles. One year ago, Vaishnavi's father was tragically killed in an automobile accident. Shama, her mother, cares for Vaishnavi by herself.

At first glance, Vaishnavi is no different to any other six year old child. However, on December 8th, Shama learned that her daughter has an *atrial septal defect* – a hole in her heart. Surgery is the only option to keep Vaishnavi alive. Yet, at the time of the heart check, Shama explained how it was impossible to afford expenses for a surgical procedure. In response, we promised Shama that JELA would return with the funds necessary to save her daughter's life.

Recently, a Baptist-affiliated medical college – located 200 kilometers from Jamkhed -agreed to conduct the surgery at a minimal cost of 300,000 JPY. JELA has therefore accepted the challenge to raise funds for Vaishnavi's surgery.

Please join our efforts to help this child in desperate need.

