

2007 - December, 13th - A week has already gone and we haven't had time yet to realize how fast the time runs ! Our measure for the time is through the amount of the



washed clothes now returned by the quarter laundry. Vítor doesn't have his underwear anymore because the laundry has lost it. Here people don't use underwear so, one of two things happened, either they thought it belonged to another customer or they have kept it as a souvenir. We have had a daily fight to re-have half a dozen of shorts.

As usual we have visits soon in the morning at the breakfast time that is not had by Maria, Sofia has it standing up and Vítor tries to taste the only morning coffee. We had gone on a rush to buy the remaining mattresses and boxes missing. And we discovered that we had been tricked in the previous

day. Spite of all human qualities of those people, "business is business", even being against a charity organization.

The prices of the mattresses are similar to the dollar fluctuation. It has come down from 700 Tks yesterday to 400 Tks today! The same street, the same traders!! Yesterday, we had bought them for the price of 450 Tks after a hard negotiation. Today we bought them for 300 Tks each.

The sensation of being tricked caused Maria to become furious, due to the ugly action of trading people being able to 'steal' The Dhaka Project children.

There is a great sense of community and all help one another, what causes negotiations harder when we are occidental. A salesman who had agreed to sell mattresses at 300 Tks each, later, refused to accept the money, and due to this behaviour Maria said that she would call the police because he had no ethic in his procedure, beginning at 650 Tks, he finally accepted the money a few hours later.



Meanwhile we have been helped by two young fellows from our quarter who agreed to go there before us to inquire about the prices and then we appeared to do the business. The trader tried to increase the price, but here the 'word' is sacred!

For Sofia, the today's morning has been spent to inform children by children in the school, what they were going to receive for their houses and how the delivery would be done, having had some time to play with the children yet during breaks - "maçada", football, "the king commands" and still a brilliant "talents show" in what many kids sang, danced or rehearsed.

Sofia had gone back to her childhood, by having to take part in the show singing and dancing the "Malhão-Malhão" (a Portuguese song). At the end of the morning the children were already able to pronounce a few Portuguese words!

There was no enough time to have lunch once again, we just had time to do a 'briefing' on the distribution. However Sofia and I don't complain a lot, once it is the best way not to have gastric surprises.

Back to the school building, we had a crowd waiting for us. All the 100 families had attended our call to receive the offers to their houses. These offers were the result of hour visits to their houses in the beginning of the week, identifying the needs of each house.

The delivery run in a surprising manner, all waiting for their turn calmly and disciplined, showing up with their children and the right amount of money.

We had taken the option of making the families to pay a symbolic value for the offers, a matter of making them feel the value of each item (200 Tks – 2 Eur for a bed that is worth of 2000 Tks, 25 Tks – 0,25 Eur – for a set of kitchen tools , etc.)

At the end we had concluded the challenge that Maria had made us! We were able to deliver 27 beds, 164 mattresses, 55 cupboards, 15 kitchen tool sets, 150 sets of bed sheets, 200 glasses, 55 boxes, 104 mosquito nets (*a must for this place!*) and 60 cans of paint, finishing in the evening, under the light of a lamp and having the company of the mosquitoes but overall receiving the gratitude and the joy of the people who could never have this type of things at home so important for a basic day to day life.

All returned home happy, some loading the rickshaws, others with the help of all their family.

We felt specially touched, during the last delivery; spite of being all this time waiting, the child's father touchingly thankful, looked us in the eyes and shook hands for a long time, we had the feeling that his gratitude came from the bottom of his soul.

How to express how satisfied we were? Joy for having given joy, relief for having accomplished our mission, touched for all the gratefulness received when we just did our work, trying to distribute in the best way the donators' money.

All what is yet to buy are the towels, that don't exist here, all have clear colour and are small, we need larger and darker towels.

So, if you have any towel to donate, don't hesitate and think in the Dhaka Project children!

Vitor has finished his day playing a Badmington match with the kids of the quarter. Sofia has come back to the Guest House to prepare the dinner and Maria as usual got lost along the way talking with the dwellers who always bring news, a problem or some tender.

And it's now a quarter past 3 in the morning and we are still doing administrative work ...But who runs for pleasure..... 🇧🇷

