



*\*Pending University admission\**

Namaste friend,

My name is Harikala and I am 18 years old. Right now I have taken my 12<sup>th</sup> final examination and soon I am going to finish high school.

Ramana's Garden has been my home for almost 14 years. I was sent here when I was five by my family to get an education. I was born in a poor village in rural India. I come from a very poor family where my parents were unable to provide a good education for my siblings and me. My father used to labour to feed us. Sometimes he did not get any work for days. The sum of money that he earned was not enough to provide us both food and education. When I was a kid I loved to study and always wanted to go to school. I have two brothers and two sisters in my family. My father always wanted a better life for us. He did not want us to labour like he does.

One day we came to Laxman Jhula to meet my grandmother who used to cook lunch for the school kids at Ramana's Garden. When she saw me and my older sister, Indra, she suggested that my father put us in Ramana's. She told my father that the school was free and we could get a very good education here. So, my parents decided to put us here.

It was a wonderful place with all the other kids like me and some of them were orphans, but they were all very happy. When we came to Ramana's I was a bit nervous and missed my parents a lot, but it was fine after a few days because of all the love and care I was given by Dr. Prabhavati. I was given everything that I needed here: food, clothes, a place to live and a chance to go to school. I now have a very big family with lots of new friends, brother and sisters.

I am a very good student and study hard in school. Here at Ramana's I learned many other new things. I learned to dance and to make jewellery. I started working in the café at Ramana's. My hobbies are to dance, to explore new things, to go for adventures and to read books. I feel safe, secure and happy here. This place means a lot to me.

After I finish high school I want to go to college to study engineering. I know I will do well in college as I have been doing well until now and I will continue to study hard. I want to do engineering because in the rural areas in India the roads and houses are not in good condition and need to be improved.

When I grow up and finish my education, I want to do social service. I want to give better education to needy children who want to accomplish something in their life. When I was a kid I always wanted to help others as much as I could, especially the children and women in India and Nepal. In India and Nepal many women face a very tough life. They are abused by society in many ways. So, I want them to realize that they have the right to raise their voices against the discrimination and violence they face every single day. I want an opportunity to help others as I have been helped by Dr. Prabhavati.

I am very thankful that I was given this opportunity by her. She is a wonderful person. She is like my mother who is always there for me no matter what. Since I came to Ramana's, I have seen her helping everyone. She does a lot for the improvement of society. She is my inspiration.