

Among the complaints that I was told are the following:

- * Half the fence posts are broken down and the school compound's security is compromised.
- * Children are fetching water at school from a well that is not secured (they could fall in and drown) - furthermore the well is OFF the school compound and a child was recently bitten by a poisonous snake in the bushes nearby.
- * No diesel to operate the pump or gasoline for the school generator so the children have no electricity.
- * 3-5 children must share one small dorm room.
- * Mattresses (if you can call them that) are the one inch thick cheapest type of uncovered foam available.
- * Children being told to bring their own hammocks to sling in the overcrowded dorm rooms as the 'mattresses' are barely wide enough for 2 children to sleep 'comfortably'.
- * Children being told to bring their own mosquito nets - as the school cannot provide.
- * Children being fed only one slice of bread and a cup of tea for breakfast.
- * The Headmistress recently had to purchase rope so children could tie their hammocks and when she approached the REO (who is supposed to manage the region for the government) for funding assistance to complete the unfinished dorms which currently house 475 Amerindian children - he allegedly told the Annai Principal "Annai is not the only school we have to look after". In my humble opinion this was a most UNPROFESSIONAL way to answer the Annai headmistress, the Minister with authority over the REO needs to give him a crash course in diplomacy - for it would have been better (if the report given to me is true) that he answered in a more pleasant manner (for example) such as: "I know the troubles you are facing Mrs..... and I assure you that I am doing my best to get you the help you need - but it may not be forthcoming as fast as you and I may wish"

Sincerely,

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