



RAY GREEN

The whole of Youlgreave, Derbyshire, turned out for a Cambodian charity sale yesterday

Cash pours in for Cambodia

by JUDITH JUDD

A SIX-YEAR-OLD girl who collected dung in a Khmer Rouge labour camp will appear on the children's television programme 'Blue Peter' tomorrow to tell her story to an audi-

ence that has already raised £650,000 for the starving of Cambodia.

Ten million people—nearly a fifth of the British population—have received Blue Peter stickers to show they have taken part in the nation-

wide bring and buy sales. The target is £1 million.

Children have brought their own toys and bought others at all 584 Oxfam shops and have organised 8,605 sales of their own with the help of a Blue Peter bring and buy kit.

The appeal was launched just over two weeks ago with a target of £100,000. After two days it had raised £148,700. After four the target was increased to £500,000. The present total is £653,166 and the new target £1 million.

The effect of the appearance tomorrow of Panita Hong, who was forced by the Khmer Rouge to collect dung when she was only four years old, can only be guessed.

At Youlgreave, near Bake-well in Derbyshire, yesterday, the whole village turned up at the village hall to a sale opened by Simon Groom, one of the programme's presenters, whose parents live nearby.

The national appeal has attracted everything from a toilet roll to a Mercedes car. One family presented their 16-ft five-berth caravan and an 81-year-old woman table mats she had made herself.

Four-year-old Sarah from Andover parted with her favourite Loola bear 'to help the poor children who have not enough to eat.' A little boy brought his much-valued game of Kerplunk and Angela, Julie and Neil wrote from Lymm in Cheshire to say they were not going to have any fireworks this year and could their bonfire money please go to the hungry boys and girls.

'Blue Peter's' eight million audience is not confined to children and at least two groups of workers have joined in the appeal. At British Leyland's Bathgate factory in Scotland 4,500 workers are to donate half an hour's overtime each night this week to raise £24,000 and at the Talbot works in Coventry hourly paid workers who have just returned after a 15-week strike have collected £640.

Even Bidy Baxter, the programme's editor and veteran of 'Blue Peter' appeals, is astonished. 'We decided to bring our annual Christmas appeal forward because of the Cambodian emergency. The response has been quite stunning.'

'We have been overwhelmed and we want to thank everyone who has contributed to this amazing total. I am sure that it is the attempt to kill off a nation which has prompted the huge response.'

The decision to take Cambodia as a subject was sparked partly by a letter from a five-year-old boy who is half Thai. He wrote to 'Blue Peter' saying: 'Last year I came from Thailand. Now our neighbours the Khmers are starving. Would "Blue Peter" help Oxfam now?'