

## THE DECEMBER 2009 MISSIONS UPDATE

contains portions of letters from various missionaries we support. We encourage you to share in the praise and also pray for these special people and their ministries. If these letters spark an interest in financially supporting one of our missionaries or serving on a Missions Care Team, please contact Pastor Dave Wardle at 224-764-4012, [dwardle@theorchardefc.org](mailto:dwardle@theorchardefc.org), or a member of the Missions Ministry Team (see back panel).



### Dr. Anil Cherian Director of Community Health & Development of the Emmanuel Hospital Association (EHA) in India.



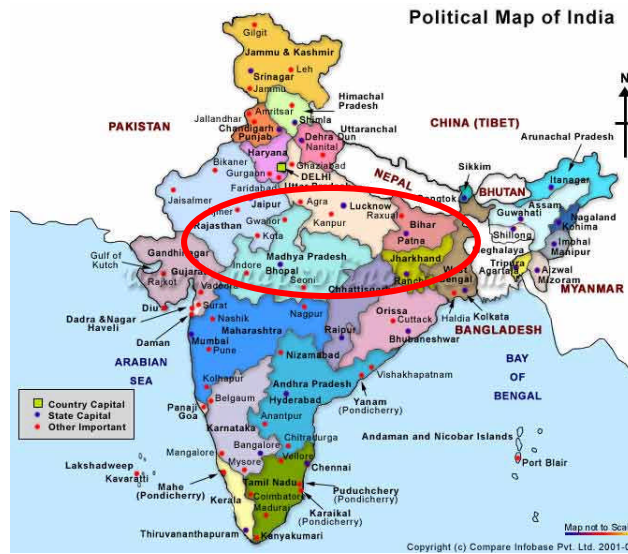
The past year has been an intense roller coaster ride, a mixture of exciting new developments and many challenges. A quick review continues to affirm to me God's faithfulness. We work

towards reducing the disease burden on poor rural and urban communities, but in a manner that is empowering and through their participation. We also address a whole gamut of needs like; clean drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, livelihood and social security, education of children and adults, promoting right living and choices among young people, improved agriculture and social forestry. At the core of all that we seek to do is the understanding that it is the Gospel of Christ that ultimately transforms communities.

**My work:** I believe that the most important role that I play is to lead and nurture a group of 30 young project managers. This has been a major challenge because of the limited time that I get to spend with each of them at their work place. I thank God that a young committed Christian couple, Gladstone and Priya, have recently joined me. Another senior doctor Dr. Suzie Francis is also assisting on a part time basis by improving the capacity of the project teams in her area of expertise - maternal and child health. Since August of this year we have started 22 of these project managers on a course on Christian leadership.

In January 2009 I was able to facilitate an exposure trip to the Andaman Islands [in the Bay

of Bengal, not far from the epicenter of the Tsunami which was near the western tip of Indonesia] for 15 of them to learn some of the lessons emerging out of the post-Tsunami Asha Sagar Project.



The longstanding Tushar Community Health project in Manduwala, located at the foothills of the Himalayas, just west of the State Capital of Dehra Dun, and a north India rail center, will become the EHA training center in the coming year. We hope to build quality training facilities to conduct regular training programs in the near future.

**New Projects:** I am in the process of facilitating the development of two new community projects – one in the state of Kashmir and the second in Bihar. EHA started a relief project in the mountainous state of Kashmir in 2005 following a major earthquake. **Kashmir** is largely Muslim and has been a troubled region - socially and politically - for over a decade. The rapport built with the community, especially among the young people is promising.

In 2008 there was a major flood in the State of Bihar following a breach in a dam in nearby Nepal, which affected over a million people. Again EHA's Disaster Management Unit launched a relief program providing cooked food, medical care and essential aid. In July 2009 a new Community Health & Development project was established to provide primary healthcare, address livelihood related issues and restore agriculture. The focus of the work would be to reduce the risk and vulnerability of the community to future disasters.

A Child Development Program, which integrates both community based rehabilitation, facility based education and supportive care of children with special needs, is another new initiative. EHA currently runs two such programs. The developmental needs of children with various conditions related to birth or congenital disease is an area where EHA can contribute significantly, and I am passionate!

**Prerana Project:** Besides my organization responsibilities I am also the Director of the Community Project located in Chhatarpur near the Chhatarpur Christian Hospital [see below]. I usually am able to give a week each month towards project management. Chhatarpur belongs to a backward region. During the past 7-8 years, the region has been struggling due to the chronic drought and experienced large-scale migration of families of people dependent on agriculture. We hope to develop a disaster risk reduction (DRR) project in 2010.

I also teach at the annual Shiloh Conference, which convenes at the Christian Medical College near Chennai, and serves to encourage young medical students to consider committing their lives to mission work in India.

**Family:** A lot of my time goes to travel and I am often away for 15 days or more. Shalini (my wife) works as an Obstetrician & Gynecologist at the Christian Hospital at Chhatarpur. Our son Ajay has entered Grade 10 at a mission boarding school in South India. We have him home for 4 months each year. We thank God for the school and the Christian atmosphere it provides for him. Rohan, our second son, attends the local school in Chhatarpur. He hopes to follow his brother to the boarding school in 2010. Rohan discovered a small but poisonous snake in our house one day but was able to alert other hospital staff, which came quickly to Rohan's rescue. We are always conscious of how God is protecting us and providing for our needs. It is our prayer that our children also come to recognize and accept the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Both Shalini and I continue to enjoy studying the Bible and we pray that in all circumstance and in spite of all our work pressures, that we would be faithful in learning from scripture.



## A Couple in Asia (Names withheld)

My wife and I recently returned from Asia with our hearts overflowing in thanksgiving and our knees ready for a workout!! Please let me explain. There were many reasons to celebrate throughout our 2+ weeks in Asia:

- Our Resident Staff members appear to be *thriving* as they live and work together and deepen their relationships with national friends.

- We are *profoundly privileged* as we engage our Asian friends about all topics of life. In one instance, my wife was able to pray specifically for the first time with an Asian friend after a family member unexpectedly died at home and his 'ghost' began making appearances to family members. In another instance, we were able to follow-up with one new believer and then connect two believers together for the first time. In a third setting, I was able to spend extended time one-on-one with a young friend ready to interact on spiritual matters from his perspective.

- We are also *continually delighted* by how well our workers are welcomed and put to work by our national hosts. Doors continue to open and opportunities literally multiply. This past week, for example, one of our leaders was asked to speak at a national gathering and share a bit of our organizational history.

Earlier while on our trip, we were able to interact with our staff's Medical, Veterinary Science, Business, and English experts, and one "encouraging challenge" was frequently expressed: *How do we stay focused rather than expanding too quickly to dilute our impact?* We need more wisdom than ever in discerning *where* and *how* to best work.

- We are also *greatly humbled* by the colleagues with whom we serve.

One senior staff couple has just returned to Asia in spite of major medical challenges ahead of them. Another staff family living in country is approaching their 5th year anniversary living in Asia, and their children seem to be flourishing along with their parents. We held a retirement banquet for our Medical Director and his wife who

have been to Asia with our organization over 20 times. Our hope is that they will continue to return to Asia at this stage of life to keep investing in relationships they have built over the decades.

*Commitment that perseveres past obstacles. Love that expresses itself in action. A servant's heart that chooses the course that is needed rather than the one naturally preferred.* These are the expressions of grace that flow from the lives of those with whom we serve. We are so grateful to be working among them. *Challenges?* Of course. If there were no challenges, I would question if we were moving forward by faith as we are called to do. How can the Gospel flow freely within the fabric of the culture? How can we ensure that those in whom we invest much pass on these resources to others rather than restricting them? How do needs within the country today differ from nearly two decades ago when we started there? How do we as an organization need to change?

As the Lord brings us to mind, please pray with us that the assistance we bring to Asia would combine professional help and personal hope in a manner that promotes life now and forever with all we serve.

*If you would like to receive this monthly Missions Update via email, please send your request to: [echeck@theorchardefc.org](mailto:echeck@theorchardefc.org).*

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# MISSIONS

# UPDATE



## DECEMBER 2009



**"To glorify God  
by multiplying God-centered,  
Christ-exalting, world-transforming  
believers through the Gospel in the greater  
Chicago area and around the world."**

Mission Statement  
The Orchard Evangelical Free Church