



Good News India

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Dr. Faiz Rahman
CHAIRMAN/FOUNDER

Dearly beloved Sponsors and Donors:

HE IS RISEN!

Spring 2011

Happy Resurrection Month!

I am just returning from another one of my rigorous trips to India. So much has happened since my last newsletter to you.... Just to recap... In January, I hosted 21 guests from the USA for all or part of 17 days. We hugged on 1800+ kids, drove thousands of miles on good and very bad roads, ministered to 1300 patients in two days, pulled out dozens of teeth and witnessed the favor of God as we barely avoided strikes and shut downs all around us.



The highlight of our January trip was the opening of our own School at "City of Refuge" Ashroi Kendra (Leper Colony). Let me share with you a little bit about leprosy... ▶▶

They are precious in His sight!



Jesus loves the little children of the world!

GNI... LINKING RESOURCES WITH HURTING PEOPLE

Leprosy... it is a “fear factor” in the lives of many people in Orissa.

India is one of a handful of countries where leprosy is still prevalent. This dreadful and debilitating disease carries with it an enormous social and religious stigma. People hide it until the signs are obvious. Then they and their families are driven out of their communities and must find a “leper colony” in order to live out the rest of their pitiless existence.

Mycobacterium leprae, which causes the disease, is the only bacterium known to man that attacks the peripheral nerves. The bacterium is sensitive to heat and thus, they migrate to the extremities... nose, ears, fingers and toes. The symptoms of the illness include: spots on the skin (which can range from a few tiny blotches to hundreds of bumps), pain, tingling, loss of feeling, inflammation, weakness, and a loss of muscle control. Dr. Hansen, a Norwegian physician, first identified this bacteria under a microscope. Thus, leprosy is also known as “Hansen’s Disease.” The incubation period before symptoms manifest themselves can take as long as 5 years.



The bacterium destroys the nerves in the places where they settle. And muscle and tissue degeneration follow soon after. Leprosy kills the “pain nerves” that alert us to wounds. A leper can reach into coals of fire or walk on a twisted ankle and not realize the damage he is doing to himself. Most of the permanent

damage comes from severe secondary infection which results in amputation.

Opinions seem to be divided as to exactly how this disease is spread, but there is general consensus that it is spread through long-term exposure to a leper (coughing, nasal discharge, open cuts/sores), combined with a weakened immune system because of malnutrition. Most people will never develop the disease even if they are exposed to the bacteria. Of the world’s population, 95% have a natural immunity to leprosy.

Growing up in Kolkata, we saw lepers moving about in small groups and we were taught to fear and despise them as having been “Divinely judged.” They were generally chased away and sometimes people would throw leftovers and decaying food



and perhaps a coin or two. The lepers who came through our area always announced themselves loudly so as not to “pollute” those they passed by.

Leprosy in the early stages is fully curable, but most of these people hide or ignore early symptoms because of the fear of total excommunication if and when leprosy is discovered.

When I began to establish our dream centers across Orissa and West Bengal, I constantly noticed the lepers around the area. They looked so sad and hopeless. I don’t think I have ever seen a leper smiling until we began to give them food and clothing. I learned long ago that “when you find a need... fill it.” One of the obvious truths of the Parable of the Good Samaritan is that although there may have been dozens of people who were mugged and dying all across Israel, he was only responsible for the one that lay across his path. When there is an obvious need, one has to do something... one cannot ignore it. Jesus would not.

In fact, lepers are one prominent group that Jesus ministered to when He walked the dusty streets of Palestine so long ago. It is not by accident that the New Testament is careful to point out that Jesus “touched” the lepers. Nobody wants to touch these dear people



because of fear and prejudice. In Mathew 8, a leper came to worship Him – the first instance of a human being worshipping Jesus since the Wisemen who bowed before the infant Jesus. And Jesus touched him.



In Mathew 11, Jesus pointed out His cleansing of lepers as one of the signs of Him being the Messiah in response to John's inquiry from prison. Further, the background context of the beautiful story of the woman breaking the alabaster box of expensive ointment takes place in Bethany at the house of one Simon, the leper.

In Luke 17, it was another Samaritan leper that Jesus healed who was the only one to come back and offer thanks and worship. These are rare instances of people actually recognizing

the Deity of Jesus before His resurrection glory. The lepers seem to lead in worshipping Christ.

Having been acquainted for all of my life with the intense poverty of Kolkata, I am still blown away by the sheer pain, rejection and suffering these people face every day. I don't know of another group of people, made in God's image, anywhere in the world that are more ostracized, rejected and despised than lepers in India.

Recently, I met with a group of lepers. I asked simple questions like, "Tell me your story; how did you contract leprosy. What happened when it became public; how did you earn a living; how much do you earn per day by begging; what happened to your spouse; how do people treat you; Do you receive food and medicines."

And, you know what... they talked and talked. Talked about their pain, their hopelessness, their struggles. Yet all the while, I did not detect anger, hatred or self-pity. It may have been buried deeper than I was going on that day. They were just so



A wise man once said: Success is when I add value to myself; significance is when I add value to someone else.

The Bible declares: "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due when it is in the power of your hands to do so." Proverbs 3:27



grateful for some help and hope. They laughed and giggled because someone was joking with them. There are only a handful of countries where leprosy is common and India leads that parade. And most of the lepers seem to be concentrated in Eastern India—the poorest area in the country—but tremendously resistant to the Gospel. And that is exactly where God has called Good News India. Frances of Assisi once said, "Start by doing what is necessary, then do what is possible and suddenly you'll be doing the impossible." Good stuff...



**We are determined
to minister hope and comfort to the
lepers who surround our Dream Centers.**

We are determined to minister hope and comfort to the lepers who surround our Dream Center. At the present, we are providing help to some 400+ lepers and their families in 4 different Leper colonies in addition to our own **City of Refuge** (Ashroi Kendra) where we currently look after 50 adults and 60 of their children. This Spring, we are opening our brand new City of Refuge School where we will educate 65 children whose parents have leprosy. These kids had been shunned and hated in their government Schools. We decided to do something about it.

But there is a cost....

O yes, it is costly to build His Kingdom on earth. We need people who will sponsor and disciple each of these 60 kids at \$30 per month.

We need people who will feed/clothe/house a Leper and his family for \$40 per month. That is the cost for a typical family to go for a "Friday Night at the Movies..." but I can use that money to take care of a family for a whole month.

You can help me build 4 Regional Cities of Refuge across Orissa where we can take care of hundreds of people that have been discarded by Society. The cost is about \$ 80,000 per City of Refuge.

Very few evangelical ministries have a concerted and intentional ministry to the Lepers of India. And we are going into the most remote of places to find these lost lambs. And you, my dear reader, can partner with me and hold the rope while I go into the pits.

Thank you in Jesus' Wonderful Name.

Dr. Rahman

Faiz Rahman
Chairman-Founder

**How lovely on the mountains are the
feet of him who brings good news,
Who announces peace and brings
Good News (Gospel) of happiness,
Who announces Salvation,
And says to Zion,
"Your God reigns !"
ISAIAH 52:7**



www.goodnewsindia.org/lepers

REFLECTIONS FROM A TRAVELER...



Back in the U.S., everything this morning is in order and routines roll out in such a familiar way I don't have to think about them. It's almost as if I didn't spend the last 16 days on another planet, I muse. I proceed through early day ablutions but my mind is far away in that vast, unfamiliar place I just experienced for the first time: **India**

*at every Center their bodies pour out
profuse smiles and arm caresses,
with joy and laughter, love ever after
they appear in new jeans and Christmas dresses*



*worship will begin and need not end
as childhood voices praise the Creator
arms reach the ceiling to show the feeling
of belonging and dependence, now and forever later*

*brown hands clapping, feet tap-tapping,
fingers raised in a graceful arc
colors rise to thrill the eyes
a swirl of sequins in the near dark....*

This new year I was privileged to accompany the GNI medical team to visit more than 1700 children in 16 Dream Centers. I confess I went prepared to minister to and fuss over these kids; imagine my shock when they unconsciously and expertly ministered to and fussed over me. They sang as if their hearts would break with gratitude; they called down heaven in passion filled prayers. Mostly tribal kids, their heritage hums through them while superstition and idol worship lurk outside the gate. But inside, on concrete floors covered by thin rugs, doubt and fear do not reign. Many, young as they are, have been tested by persecutions I have only read about. Without any of the world's material goods, they testify of deliverance and assert calmly, "I have no lack."

They love to perform to pulsing Indo/Christian music and my, oh my, they defy description with choreography snatched from Broadway, danced in bare feet on a tiny stage. The audience snuggles knee-to-knee a few feet away, rapturous in watching. One of the favorite songs, Center to Center, was "Pray For India." I left that troubled country with the certainty that only Christian generations can save it.



Pray for India. We should, we can, we must.

Peggy Westerfield
Retired teacher ~ Florida





Our website has a new look!

www.goodnewsindia.org

A special "Thank you" to so many of you who have responded to our request to increase your monthly support from **\$25 to \$30** to help cover the increased cost of living that we have experienced in India.

- ▶ If you set up your sponsorship to remit automatically through **Paypal** and you would like to increase your support, please log in to your Paypal account, delete your current transaction "subscription" and then go to www.goodnewsindia.org/setup to fill in your child's I.D. number and finish the new setup. Questions? Call 800.920.3958
- ▶ Recurring **credit/debit card sponsors** may call (800.920.3958) or email the office (gni.phx@gmail.com) to let us know that you would like to increase the amount and we will take care of it for you.



- ▶ If you utilize the monthly, **automatic credit card** payment and your bank replaces your credit card for any reason, please let us know the new card number so that we can update your information, ensuring that your sponsorship continues uninterrupted.

▶ If you Write **CHECKS** for your donations / sponsorship...

Please note that our office now uses electronic depositing, so YOUR CHECKS WILL HAVE THE FOLLOWING ENDORSEMENT: "Processed via remote deposit - Compass Bank"



Contact Us

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Giving by Phone

If you would like to give a one-time donation or set up your sponsorship commitment on an auto monthly deduction using your debit or credit card, please call us.

Designated Funds

GNI will conscientiously honor designated funds for specific projects but reserves the right to use these funds and any excess for ministry expenses at the discretion of the Board.

Questions?

If you have questions about your sponsorship or corresponding with your child, please call or email us.

PROJECT

Listed by
Child I.D.'s

NEEDS:

BALIGERIA (101-299)

1 Large Generator \$1,780
Vocational School \$15,000

KALAHANDI (301-499)

Girls Bathroom \$670
6 Chair \$40
Water Tank \$250

TIHIDI (501-699)

1 Cooking pot (Lg) \$80
10 Buckets \$55
4 Ceiling Fan \$110
2 Table fan \$70

KALIMPONG (700-799)

10 Pillows \$35

BALASORE (801-999)

Computer/Printer \$315
Bed Covers \$180

JHARSUGUDA (1001-1199)

3 Cooler \$400
3 Chairs \$25
20 Ceiling fan \$535
8 Beds for older kids \$500
2 Floor Mats \$57
2 Water filter \$335

SILGURI (1201 -1399)

1 Refrigerator \$228
Tea pot \$35

SIRISBONI (1401-1599)

1 Storage cupboard \$75
8 Ceiling Fan \$173
Kitchen Paint \$110
1 Almirah (Cupboard) \$80

GAJAPATI (1601-1799)

2 Cupboards \$85
10 Ceiling fans \$270
2 Bicycles \$130

KORAPUT (1801-1999)

19 Ceiling Fans \$510
30 CFL Bulbs \$80

KANDHAMAL (2001-2199)

3 Ceiling Fans \$70
8 Cooler \$1,070
1 Pressure Cooker \$60

BOUDH (2201-2299)

1 Fridge \$270
1 Almirah (Cupboard) \$100
2 Floor carpet \$57
10 Chairs \$80

CUTTACK (2401-2599)

Bore well \$1,670

BARAKATI (2601-2799)

Pump & Pipe Fittings \$1,310
Boundary Fence w/Gate \$600
School Shoes \$110

GANJAM (2801-2999)

2 Sound systems \$350
Sewing machine \$180
10 Chairs \$80
3 big floor mat \$135

ASHROI KENDRA (LEPER 3200s)

Boundary Fencing \$270
Water Tank for boy's room \$225
Soil digging Instruments \$35

PURI (3601-3799)

1 Trunk (Lg) \$50
1 Water filter \$170
1 Generator \$1,300

RAYAGADA (3801-3999)

3 Coolers \$400
2 Fans \$55
4 Floor carpet \$115

LODHA TRIBE (4001-4299)

10 Iron buckets \$40

SUNDARGARH (5001-5199)

10 Mosquito nets \$70

MALKANGIRI (5201-5399)

4 Ceiling Fans \$110
1 Almirah (Cupboard) \$125

NABRANGPUR (5401-5599)

1 Steel Cabinet \$175
1 Ceiling Fan \$30
3 Coolers \$400

KHEMASOLE (5601-5799)

Deep well \$1,870



BICYCLES NEEDED!

20 kids at our **Baligeria Dream Center** urgently need bicycles (\$60 each) as their school is 5 miles each way. They are doubling and tripling up on our existing bicycles.

Barakati Dream Center (ID: 2600's) needs an iron gate at a cost of \$300. They need a deep pump as the well water has receded significantly. Cost: \$1000.

If you would like to support the ministries of **Good News India** by giving a one-time donation or setting up a monthly gift, you may mail a check, use the form below to make a donation by debit or credit card, or call us at (800) 920-3958 U.S. (877) 883-3778 CANADA



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