

FEED ORISSA

An Update by Mr. P. Thomas Livingstone, Missionary, Bargarh, Orissa

Dearly beloved in Christ,

Our exploits in the State of Orissa are expanding from villages to blocks in the Bargarh district. We conducted an intensive medical camp for five days from the 30th of March to the 3rd of April, in association with Medivision. This camp covered 125 villages of 3 blocks of Bargarh District. A total of 4822 patients were treated over the 5 days. That means an average of 964 patients per day. Visualize a crowd of a 1000 sick people thronging for medical attention each day and you get an idea of the mammoth need here. The camp also helped us to get into a good rapport with the local leaders and the villagers. Praise the Lord, for His doings are marvelous in our eyes.

Our sincere thanks to Medivision General Secretary Dr. Sashya, Coordinator, promotional worker and the medical team—Dr. Anand Dorai, Dr. Allan, Dr. Vino, Dr. Vasantha, Dr. Mercy, Dr. Caesar, the three nurses, the four pharmacists and the lab technician.

We planned to have celebrations on the 24th of March, which is observed as the World TB day as a means to create awareness among the nearby villages. There was a procession from Jhunungapali to our Blessing centre in Diptipur. TB patients who have completed their treatment and three hundred women from our Self Help Groups participated in the procession, holding placards. The procession halted in between at few places to create awareness.

Several new TB patients have been identified and started on treatment. It is thrilling to see patients who had been carried into the clinic sometime ago, walking in with bright cheerful faces. Mrs. Rajkumari Barik from Sirigida was deserted by her husband when she contracted TB. Her parents used to put her on a bicycle and bring her for treatment. Now she is able to walk and has also put on weight! Another such person is Mr. Soukilal Bariha from Tal village. Our staff says, “When he was brought to us for treatment, he looked

like a huge piece of cotton. After a few weeks of treatment he seems to be as strong as a stone.” We can add many such stories with the title “sorrow turned into joy” but for the limited space. Surely God has blessed the medicines and the ration we provide them. 368 have so far completed treatment.

Hundreds of village folks gathered to watch the Malaria and Leprosy awareness films. People were happy to have their eyes opened and thanked us profusely. Gone are those days when we used to go village after village creating awareness by holding placards and screaming in a microphone at the top of our voices. Thanks to the technology, but we stand requesting your prayers so that all our efforts may bear fruit.

We have been asked to vacate the office building and the hostel where two of our girls were staying. Though it was a jolt to us, we know our Lord never makes mistakes. We feel it is God’s way of telling us to enlarge the place of our tent and stretch out the curtains of our dwellings; lengthen our cords and strengthen our stakes. For we shall expand to the right and to the left... (Isa 54:2,3). So we have shifted the social work department to Bargarh, which is the district head quarter. From here it is more convenient to cover the thirty blocks of the district. The centre for evangelism will continue to be in Diptipur.

This summer, Diptipur was livened up by the VBS that we conducted for the first time. The temperature hovered around 48° C, but



hearts were refreshed as 83 children from the nearby villages converged at M.E. School from 19th to the 21th of May. The classes were held both in the mornings and in the evenings upto 6.30 pm. Early on the third day, about 100 children arrived. Dressed colourfully, they went on a procession around Diptipur. In the Valedictory function, the children sang and recited memory verses. This is the first time VBS is conducted for the non Christian children in Diptipur! We pray that the seed sown in these young hearts grow and bring forth abundant harvest.

Our staff regularly visit the budding congregations in villages. We find children skipping their lunch to listen to the stories from the Bible during the lunch break. It is exhilarating to see the young and the old sing and dance,

*“Shaitane pochhe ja, pochhe ja,
Mu Jesu ra pilla”*

(Satan, get behind me. I am a child of God)

We arranged a “Church Elders Training Camp” for three days from the 16th to the 18th of May. Ten leaders participated and



were taught the basic principles of Christian Leadership. We rejoiced with the heaven when sixteen people from 3 villages obeyed the Lord and joined the Church.

The jubilant moment came when we dedicated our first church in Jimbahal on the 28th of August. The Jimbahal congregation gave us a traditional welcome with *mala* and *dolak*. It was our privilege to have Mr. E. L. Mathansingh, the Field Coordinator visiting us and also dedicating the Church. Dr. Mrs. Lilian Stanley shared the word of God. It is a milestone in the history of Feed Orissa. We

thank Dr. Alfred Daniel, CMC, Vellore, for sponsoring this construction.

In Bargarh, we turned our attention towards the people living in slums. We want to work towards literacy, women’s development, weaning



children away from labour and putting them in schools and so on. To start with, we have started four tuition centres in Udhayanagar, Gandhinagar and Mangalapoda. These centres help around 140 children in the age group of 5-13.

New applicants were interviewed and ten were recruited.

Dear partners, we remember you as often as we see a grin on poverty stricken faces and a sparkle in the forlorn eyes; for we know there is somebody behind our shoulders to be thanked. Thank you for your tremendous support and strength that you offer us.

A warm handshake to every one of you.f

Address for Correspondence and Contributions:

BLESSING YOUTH MISSION

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Money Orders, Cheques, Bank Drafts to be sent in favour of BLESSING YOUTH MISSION, VELLORE.

Any relief material may be sent by SRMT or TCI Lorry Service to BARGARH, Orissa and the Way Bill to—Mr. P. Thomas Livingstone, Asish Sebasadan, DAM Colony, Bargarh 768 028. Mobile: 9337311560. <feed_orissa@yahoo.com>