

Greetings to my sponsoring churches!

August was a month of traveling for me - some job related and some vacation related. I began the month flying north to the state of Assam to visit Parkijuli Hospital and then by train to the state of Jharkhand and Mohulpahari Hospital. Then I went by train to Calcutta for a day and a night so I could visit the Missionaries of Charity and finally back to Vellore for a week before leaving for some vacation time in Australia and Malaysia.

It had been very hot and rainless in Vellore. Nights brought the smell of rain and a jump in humidity, but no rain. It wasn't as hot at Parkijuli, but there was more humidity and less electricity. I made rounds at the hospital with Dr. Iswary and saw several cases of malaria that had affected the brain. I was glad I had started malaria prophylaxis before this trip. The conditions at the hospital are difficult but Dr. Iswary is pretty amazing. He continues to be the only doctor at the hospital but now a friend is going to come three days a week to help out.

I looked forward to the 14-16 hour train trip to Mohulpahari as the train has A/C. Slight glitch - I got to the train station four hours before the train was due to leave and then the train was two hours late! I spent the first three hours in the First Class Lounge, but then an older fellow asked me to register and proceeded to close the windows and lock the door. The three hours before the train left were very hot and sweaty!

In Mohulpahari, it was slightly cooler but the electricity was very odd. During the night it seemed to be at about 25% so that my fan made a revolution once a second or so. That doesn't make for chilling, but it did move the air a little. Then the power went out completely and the mosquitos started buzzing around me. They say that mosquitos buzz around your ears to annoy you and raise your blood pressure and thus make your blood more available. That's what they say! There was a bed net, but I would have cooked inside that. The fan did come back on at low speed so I slept a little but I was a bit bitten up in the morning. The next night I put a mosquito coil under the bed. The fumes were a little nasty but that's the price you have to pay for no buzzing and biting! Between my "talks" with the mosquitos, I met with the Medical Superintendent at Mohulpahari who has retired but has stayed on to help out. And there was a wonderful rain shower which lasted about 20 minutes. The drought situation there is dire - this is the first time in 23 years that they haven't had monsoon rains in June or July.

The train trip to Calcutta was uneventful and I always enjoy the people watching. There are so many different things people snack on and a vendor for every one of those things. There was even a guy giving massages, but he looked a little rough as he pulled hair, bent hands, and banged with his fist! It was good to be in the city with 24 hour a day electricity and mosquitos that were smart enough not to buzz. I had a good visit with the Missionaries of Charity. I met with six sisters - two of them were doctors, one was the Superior General, and the other three were counselors. They even gave me a picture of Mother Teresa (their founder) and a piece of one of her saris.

Back in Vellore, I had a few days to pack and get ready for my vacation in Australia. One of those days was my birthday on August 15th - India always puts on a very nice show for my birthday as it is also India's Independence Day. On the 16th, we had a church retreat - you can find a link to some photos on my web page (ZionMilaca.org/Rev_John_Lunn) - and then I left late evening for a flight to Kuala Lumpur and then to Adelaide, Australia. More about my vacation time in Australia next time.

After that, I am back in India for a few days and then on a plane for the USA and my recruiting trip. Please keep me in your prayers as I travel. You are always in mine.