

KAILAKURI HEALTH CARE PROJECT

(Kailakuri & the Mati NGO)

Village Kailakuri, Madhupur Thana, Tangail District, Bangladesh



SEPTEMBER 2016:

BIOGRAPHERS, DENTAL CAMP & A SORROW-FILLED ANNIVERSARY



As we mark the first anniversary of Dr Bhai's passing, we are encouraged by the continued support of Bangladeshis and individuals from around the world. This year we have received substantial medicine donations, funds for a new administration building, building repairs and pond fill-ups, and most importantly, donations to cover the costs of patient care at Kailakuri. Check out our new Givealittle page created by Stuart Lynch <https://givealittle.co.nz/org/khcp> where we will advertise various Kailakuri funding needs (such as another pond fill-up!)

The first of September was a bittersweet reminder, both of Kailakuri's accomplishments over the past year (in Edric's absence), but also just how much he is missed by staff and patients, the songs, prayers and speeches interspersed with tears a painful reminder of his loss. We have reasons to be hopeful: the immanent arrival of Drs Jason and Merindy in January 2017, the dedicated commitment of Kailakuri staff, and several New Zealanders interested in short-term volunteering. Our patient numbers are stable and we are mindful of keeping costs down where possible. We are also realistic about the challenges of increasing project funding in a competitive international environment, attracting a new generation of supporters and ensuring we are able to fulfil the rules and regulations of the Bangladeshi health sector and NGO Bureau.

The next day we held a free dental camp at Kailakuri, with support from Sapporo Dental Medical College and Hospital. Their team set off from Dhaka at 6am and upon arrival they were straight into work, devoting the whole afternoon to treating 140+ Kailakuri patients. Small children seemed the least enthusiastic about seeing the dentist, but I am sure their parents appreciated it. We are immensely grateful to the Sapporo Dental doctors for giving up their weekend to support us. Next we have included a few excerpts from Kate and her mum Faith, who visited Bangladesh for the past month to research Dr Baker's biography, and lastly a few words from New Zealand Link Group treasurer Glenn Baker. We hope that you enjoy reading.



Dental patient in the arms of his mother



Sapporo Dental team being welcomed

FROM KATE DAY:

Well. Let me whet your appetite. I have now spent one month in Bangladesh with my mother, who is my research assistant and fellow novice at Bangladesh life. I have interviewed more than 70 Bangladeshis who knew Edric. Gradually, the 'plot' of the Bangladesh chapter in Edric's life is becoming clear.

It is an amazing story. I have heard about floods, a fire, run-away patients, illicit marriage, cultural taboos and visits from police. There have been tragic deaths and heroic, last minute saves. As I have learned about diverse topics - from diabetes to traditional uses of leeches - I have sometimes kept interviewees overtime and tested my interpreters' endurance! It has been a lot to take in, but I believe we should be excited: as we all suspected, Edric's adventures will be great stuff for a book.

Our location - and the setting of the story - is stunning. Kailakuri lies among pineapple gardens and fields of rice. Cool mornings quickly become warm days, and by lunch the staff have to step over sleeping goats along the road to the kitchen. At sunset the mosque sounds the call to prayer; Hindu households bang their gong for evening puja. Then stars come out, their reflections in the rice paddies blending with the flickering fireflies. I understand why Edric didn't want to leave this place.

Then there are the characters. At Kailakuri we have been welcomed as friends by staff eager to tell their part of Edric's story. Many have ended in tears as they recount memories. One particular story stood out to me - that of a young girl who recovered from blindness. My interpreter remarked, 'That story was interesting'; I introduced him to the phrase 'that's an understatement!'. I came here with respect for Edric, but leave with far more - I have met so many of the people whose lives he helped to transform. I can't wait to write about it.



Faith & Kate with a few of our staff

From here I travel to Vietnam's Central Highlands where Edric worked for several years. After that, I move to Wellington where I will write. I would appreciate your prayers as I untangle the memories I have collected, and wrestle them into words and a shape that does Edric's story justice. For those who have a passion for seeing Edric's story told- we will be seeking funds for this biography project. If you would like to contribute, please email Peter Wilson at kailakuri.nzlink@gmail.com (Do note, this project is financially separate from KHCP, and we much prefer you give funds to the clinic!) Finally, if you would like to share memories to inform the biography, feel free to email kate.v.day@gmail.com.

FROM FAITH ALEXANDER:

It has been very interesting watching different activities around the Project. Trees were planted beside the main entrance but only after the garden staff had made a split bamboo fence to deter the wandering goats. The mud-brick Newmarket Rotary Outpatients Building has had its regular recoating of mud and cow dung, helped by some of the kitchen staff. The process to prepare the road between the In and Outpatients for sealing couldn't be more different from NZ methods. But it may be quicker!

The topics of conversation around our "dinner table" (sitting on woven bamboo mats on the floor) have been wonderfully varied. Bangla lessons relating to what we were eating, how to wear a lungi and dokmanda, the current Black Caps score during the Zimbabwe tour and comparisons of Bangladeshi and New Zealand life are just a few. And of course many issues relating to the Project that staff could discuss with us as we ate together. Sometimes we ate by electric light and under the welcome ceiling fans but more often we talked together in the very atmospheric light given by the kerosene lamps because the power was off.

Everyone has been so welcoming from our first day. And so tolerant of our many questions and interruptions. And stumbling attempts at Bangla! Thank you all for having us to stay with you.

FROM NZ LINK GROUP TREASURER (GLENN BAKER)



In recent months the call for funds by the Project have been well above previous needs when expressed in New Zealand dollars. Co-operative work with Nadine and the Project Staff has shown that the less favourable exchange rate and high inflation are major factors. None of these is in the NZ Link's control.

The Project is under pressure and trying to respond to the situation but it is made difficult by the fact that the staff are paid much less than the outside market (Government and NGO) labour rates. Even the poor are entitled to dignified medical help and that means fairly paid staff to provide it. The challenge then is for us to prayerfully consider the work Edric started and pledge to support the needs of God's work and call through these times and into the future. I will visit the Project for 4-5 days late September to encourage them with our support.

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WEBSITES

<http://sites.google.com/site/kailakurihealth>

FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/kailakuri

(Like our Facebook page and receive regular updates)

Donations can be made by...

- Paying online through our website via Paypal at <http://sites.google.com/site/kailakurihealth>
- Making a telegraphic transfer (TT) payment to our New Zealand Bank Account (ANZ, Whakatane, New Zealand). Account Name: Kailakuri Health Care Project - Link Group; Account Number: **01 0486 0185024 00**, **SWIFT code ANZ BNZ 22**. Please email Glenn Baker at treasurerkhcp@gmail.com with your donation and contact details.
- If you live in the United States, you can write a cheque to "Asia Connection Inc". Please indicate on a separate note that the donation is for Kailakuri and send to Ted Rose, Treasurer, Asia Connection Inc, 1226 Scott St, El Cerrito, CA.94530-2458, and give your contact details for a receipt.

Thank-you so much for your support.

Our greatest need is gifts towards on-going running costs.