

BANGLADESH – NEPAL MISSIONS REPORT

APRIL, 2020

Due to the continued Covid-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions I did no in-person reporting to supporters during April. As stated in last month's report, Brenda and I returned home from Bangladesh on March 14, just over two weeks after arrival there. Previously we had spent three weeks in Nepal and Northeastern India. Classes at Khulna Bible College were completed by March 23 and students were sent to their homes.

One student from the extreme southeastern corner of Bangladesh (Bundurbans District) chose to stop en route home to visit his brother in Dhaka. Unfortunately he was caught by government imposed lock down orders and suspension of bus and train travel, and was confined there for just over a month. I received word within the past week that he was finally able to finish his journey home and is safe and well there with his parents.

Both Bangladesh and Nepal continue under governmentally imposed lockdown status which means most inhabitants are unable to work. Very few have any savings or reserve funds to help them through such an extensive period. As of today, May 5, the lockdown has reached 43 days in Nepal and is about the same in Bangladesh (it was imposed there on March 25). The standing orders are valid through mid-May in both countries and are subject to extension. People there, including our Christian brothers and sisters, are in desperate straits. I am seeking information as to how relief may be distributed to those in greatest need but have not yet confirmed effective methods. I will provide those to you when they are available.

Our reporting schedule is obviously interrupted as well as plans for a return to South Asia in late summer. Like everyone else we cannot make plans for the future until given some sort of clearance by our officials. In terms of travel to Asia that involves not only our local and federal governments in our own country, but also any nations through whom or to whom we might desire to travel. We pray that God will help to overcome the pandemic and provide safety and confidence for our work abroad to continue.

At Khulna Bible College the administrators are corresponding with preachers and alumni throughout the country in order to recruit new students for the fall semester. At present we are preparing to reopen for the 2020 – 2021 school year, though it is possible that the start of classes will be delayed a few weeks. KBC's normal schedule calls for beginning fall classes on the first week in August, but it is possible to postpone opening as late as early September without creating problems.

Churches in both countries are meeting in small groups in separate locations during this period of lockdown. They, like most congregations in the U.S. are complying with governmental regulations while still maintaining as much spiritual activity and fellowship as is possible. For example, the Church in Dhahran, Nepal brings 2 or 3 families together in the church building each Sunday, with other similar sized groups meeting in various members' homes. As Christians are doing everywhere they pray that fellowship and worship in full assembly will resume quickly.



Evangelist Kaziman Shrestha at Dhahran Church building, Nepal

Preachers continue to visit church members by mobile phone, e-mail, and other means as well as to reach out to seekers for truth with the message of salvation through Jesus. They distribute aid to those in need as they are able, and try to find other ways of comforting and strengthening their communities. Please continue to remember them and all Christians there in your prayers.

Thanks to everyone for your communications, prayers, and financial support. May God bless you and keep you safe and well.

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