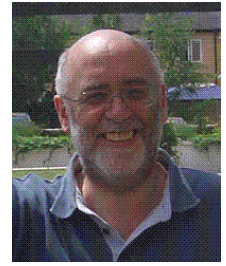




www.leprosymission.org.uk

Chris in Bangladesh



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PLEASE PRAY FOR

Me as I settle in and for the organization here to establish how best I can support this valuable work. Pray especially for Labio, the Finance Director, with whom I am working closely and with Bert, the Country Director that they might discern God's will as we talk and plan together.

The Country of Bangladesh that its many needs may be met. That with about half the population living on less than \$1 dollar per day, they might have enough food to eat and clean water to drink.

My family and loved ones because they miss me and I miss them

Some more pictures on Chris' website
www.havenfunerals.com/news.html

Chris Wickenden is working for the Leprosy Mission Bangladesh for a year. He is helping build the capacity of the local staff in the areas of Finance and Accounting. If you would like to contact him by email you can do so directly to chrisw@tlmbangladesh.org. He would be pleased to hear from you

Goodbyes

It was so hard saying goodbye. We organized a farewell dinner at our local Bangladeshi restaurant in London and about 35 of my church friends came along to say goodbye. It was a lovely evening. Special Bangla food and the whole restaurant taken over by us. Loads of laughter and chat and a very happy atmosphere. I have been so surprised and encouraged by the interest people have shown in my decision to work with The Leprosy Mission in Bangladesh. I believed that what I was doing was what God wanted me to but I didn't think that anyone else would be particularly bothered. When the news gradually filtered out, I began to receive such support. My work colleagues at HAVEN Funeral Services willingly took up the challenge of organizing the business without me. They organized another farewell do, gave me gifts, arranged press releases to explain what I was up to for the next year and generally encouraged me to go

away (!) A local nursing home organized a goodbye party and presented me with a very substantial cheque and I was very touched that the Benedictine Community at Ealing Abbey, with whom I have worked for many years also contributed generously to TLM's work in



Bangladesh. My GP helped with prescriptions to cover me for the year and Walkers our local Chemist did a very generous deal on the drugs I needed to survive 5,000 miles away from London. HAVEN's printers Kall Kwik in Ealing provided leaflets and publicity material free of charge and our florist, Sacha's Flowers gave me a pack of extra-strength Immodium so

that I wouldn't keep going in Bangladesh! Thanks to all of you and to so many others for the kind words of encouragement and best wishes.

The last Sunday at my home church at Haven Green, Ealing as well as a commissioning service at North Hanwell Baptist Church, gave me the opportunity to explain what I was expecting to do in Bangladesh and how I believed God had gently prodded me into taking this step. It also gave me an opportunity to play the organ for the last time for a year, really loudly!

After heart-rending goodbyes to my loved ones I finally got on the plane, buckled my seat belt up and started chatting to my neighbouring passenger - a very interesting young American woman who worked for World Vision and was going to Dhaka to join their team there for a conference. Shortly after, I had my last glass of claret!

About Bangladesh

Bangladesh is about 5,000 miles away from London as the crow flies. The population is about 150 million and the population in Dhaka, the capital is about 15 million (3 times the population of greater London). Life expectancy from birth is 60. About 52% of the population are literate.

Currently the climate is lovely (its Winter), in July the tem-

perature rises to between 98 - 105 F with humidity of 99%.

The country is poor, exporting principally Jute, Tea, Clothing, Leather goods, frozen shrimps and importing fuel, cotton, rice (a big issue in the country at the moment - caused by salt pollution to the rice fields after last Autumn's cyclone), edible oil etc. There is currently a big push to improve the country's

capability in Information Technology (Computer Software and its application).

The country is 86.6% Muslim, 12.1% Hindu, 0.6% Buddhist, 0.4% Christian and 0.3% others.

The principle language is Bangla, spoken by 95% of the population but not yet by me!