

Notes from Nepal

March 2009

We have arrived in Pokhara, with the aid of a lot of prayer and a few travel sickness pills! We had a week-long stay in Kathmandu which was an interesting first glimpse of Nepal. Having arrived at the airport and managed to get through customs, our first experience of the city was driving through the city in the dark at rush hour in the back of the INF van. The rollercoasters in the UK have nothing on this adventure! But we survived that and have since experienced many forms of transport with varying degrees of theme park excitement.

Some of our highlights in Kathmandu were meeting up with the other BMS mission personnel and hearing about all of the work that they are doing. We saw an elephant walk down a main road and round the roundabout holding up all of the traffic on his journey back to the zoo with his breakfast. We also enjoyed taking a trip to the super market and finding you could buy real chocolate and haribo.



Getting breakfast

The bus trip from Kathmandu to Pokhara was another Nepali travel experience. The road can best be described as Nepal's version of the M1 but only about the width of a country lane and a steep drop on one side. Thank God for his answer to prayer and keeping us safe on the journey.

Having made it to Pokhara we have moved into a short-term flat which we are sharing with another INF couple, Ross and Esther Mitchell, who are also from the UK. Our flat is great, other than the odd bug – Rich has so far managed to squash three cockroaches! We have also just about managed to get used to the load shedding; the scheduled power cuts. We are currently getting eight hours of power a day, but half of it overnight when we are asleep. The other excitement here is the landlord's two guard dogs called Whisky and Udi. One day we noticed that Udi was



not around, we asked our English-speaking landlord what had happened and he said his wife had told him: a tiger has eaten him. We were a bit shocked but just thought it more likely to be a leopard. However a few days later Udi returned...had Udi come back from the dead? Or had the tiger spat him out whole finding him not to his taste? We later found out that Udi had just decide to wander off on a little tour of Pokhara.

We have had some frustrations though, one of which has been our internet access. For the first few weeks we were sharing a line with the landlord and the line wouldn't support the internet. Getting a phone line here is tricky because you have to join a waiting list for a phone line which someone has given up; then unless you pay a bribe to the telecoms office you have to wait it out for someone to attach a line to your house. However, with a lot of prayer, within two weeks of moving in we had a phone line good enough to Skype from, which is a real answer to prayer.

We have also had our first experiences of Nepali church, which is on a Saturday morning. Everybody sits on the floor, men on one side and women on the other. People arrive loosely from around 10 o'clock when they have a time of singing for an hour and then a sermon for an hour when even the power going off can't stop a preacher in mid-sermon. The whole of the service is in Nepali so we only understand the odd word, although we now have our



NayaGaun church

Nepali hymn books, in Devanagari script but our speed reading isn't quite up to the speed of their singing yet.

The majority of our time, however, has been spent learning the language. We are now able to read most words but don't understand what they mean. The speaking and writing are also coming on slowly. Rich has learnt to say "I don't like green vegetables" as well as making up his own version of some of the words. He has managed to get most of our class and our teacher to say Rambo instead of raamro (good) and Haribo instead of hariyo (green). Elly has also discovered that she can continue her hobby of shopping here. She has even got good at haggling with the shopkeepers and has really enjoyed being able to pick out material to take to the tailors to have kurta surwals made up – the count currently stands at about eight!

In conclusion our first month in Nepali has been one long learning experience with us getting used to a lot of new things but it has been an amazing first month really with loads of blessings and answers to prayers.

Things to be thankful for.

- ◆ Safe travel
- ◆ All the people who have helped us to settle in
- ◆ The welcome from the Nepali people

Prayer for:

- ◆ Language learning
- ◆ Elly as she starts work
- ◆ INF finding the right job for Rich
- ◆ That we find the right church for us to join

Elly and Rich

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