

Helping People

One Drop At A Time

Field Report From India

November 11, 2005

Dear Friends,

It has only been a week since we last emailed you about our adventures in India but it feels like months to us! We have been so busy the time has warped. We are now in Kolar, the town where Mike spent two years in the Peace Corps and where we wanted to begin our water filter project. We have been here for four days and we already have a workshop site, people to work in the workshop and probable orders for 200 filters!!!

The people here have been hospitable beyond words. Whatever we want we get. We are working through the local Rotary club to establish ourselves in this area. One Rotarian, Ramachandre Gowda, has been an absolute saint. He has been with us every day since we arrived. He is an engineer by profession and offered us his factory area to establish our workshop. Today a contractor poured a slab of concrete for part of the manufacturing area. We have all of the tools we need and Monday after the slab cures we will pour our first filter!

Wednesday night we spoke at the Rotary Club of Kolar weekly meeting and people seemed excited about our project. Friday night we will attend the meeting of the Rotary Club of Bangalore Cubbon Park to do a slide show presentation. A week from Sunday we are attending a district Rotary meeting where they expect 600-700 people in attendance from 70-something Rotary clubs in this area. Ramachandre is going to ask the current district governor if we can have 10 minutes to speak about our water filter project. Ah....the power of Rotary!

Our expectations for what we could accomplish in 30 days in India has already been exceeded. As we continue to have success implementing this project we keep raising the bar of our expectations.

Not only have we advanced our water filter program, but the Rotary Club of Hamden will collaborate on a second water project with the Rotary Club of Kolar to provide pure drinking water at three public bus stations which each service up to 5,000 people per day. Our Rotary club has agreed to match a contribution by the Rotary Club of Kolar which we hope will be matched by the Rotary International Foundation in the form of a Rotary matching grant. This was an unexpected opportunity to do a lot of good with relatively few dollars.

We are staying at a hotel approximately 3 kilometers from the central part of the town on the Bangalore-Madras Road. We have a spacious room with a private bath room, air conditioning, and a television that gets three American stations, one being HBO. The cost for the room is a whopping \$10.00 per night! Surprisingly there isn't high speed internet service to be had. The only one we've located so far is a dial up connection without the capacity to run the software necessary to access our office computers. We will be going to Bangalore tomorrow and will catch up on our computer communications and send you this message.



giving

**U.S. dollars go a long way
in India.....for example:**

Adopt A Family: (Donation of one water filter to a needy family who is unable to purchase a filter)	\$ 25
Adopt A School: (Donation of two water filters to a school accompanied by a clean water education program)	\$ 100
Adopt A Village Partnership: (Donation of up to 50 filters to a needy village, subsidy of up to 30 filters purchased by villagers, soap & educational program for village children, community steward for one year)	\$ 2,500

Make Checks Payable to:

**South Asia Pure Water Initiative, Inc.
2832 Whitney Avenue,
Hamden CT 06518 USA**

The food at this hotel is south Indian vegetarian and is outstanding! Our friend Haroon from Bangalore who is an international chef of note ate with us on our first day here and raved about his meal. Breakfast for the two of us costs about 50 cents! Dinner is a multi-course feast and usually runs about \$3.00 for both of us including a liter of bottled water and tea afterwards.

Tomorrow we will take a bus back to Bangalore to spend the weekend with our friend Haroon. A relative of his is getting married on Sunday and we will attend the wedding. Haroon says there will be 1,000 guests and an incredible feast. They will be serving a special meal called wedding Biryani, which we have had and is to die for. Cathy will shop on Saturday for an Indian style dress for the occasion. What an unexpected treat!

Next week we will be in full production of the water filters and Mike will be preparing training sessions to transfer information he learned in Canada to our Indian counterparts. We will also have a local fabricator begin making more molds so we can increase our filter production. We think that there will be so much demand for the filters that we will not be able to make them fast enough with only one mold.

This adventure already has enough material for a novel. We are keeping a daily journal of our comings and goings so we remember all of the details. There is way too much to include in this type of correspondence. We hope to share our journal with anyone interested after we return. We will also try to send some pictures with our next update.

We will be back in Bangalore next weekend and will send another update at that time.

Thinking of you all.

Cathy and Mike

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