

DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DIOCESE OF CUTTACK, CHURCH OF NORTH INDIA, AND UPDATE ON OUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL AT BERHAMPUR

Reverend Graham has asked me to pass on a huge, heartfelt 'thank you' to everyone across the District who has raised donations for the Christian Hospital at Berhampur – either as individuals, as churches and Circuits, or as members of District MWiB.

Berhampur is located in the Ganjam District, southern Odisha, a predominantly rural area where the population is made up of largely Tribal and Dalit people. They suffer considerable challenges in terms of deprivation and poverty, poor nutrition, disease – such as malaria and tuberculosis, and infant and maternal mortality. The Christian Hospital offers a high standard of compassionate care at affordable costs, under the Directorship of Dr M K Nanda. A vital aspect of the Hospital's work is the integral Nurses' Training College, through which women are not only equipped with much sought-after professional skills, but are also empowered to generate sustainable change in their homes and communities.

New government regulations meant that the hospital – which is over 100 years old – was unable to meet the requirements without a rebuild of the core structures. In 2019, Dr Nanda oversaw the drawing up of plans for new buildings and renovations to some of the existing blocks which will give space for 170 beds, additional and enhanced services, and accommodation for the increased number of staff required.

In January 2021 work began, despite the challenges of the Covid pandemic, and earlier this month Dr Nanda sent photographs of the progress to Rev Graham, reporting that the work is now in its final stages and it is hoped to complete in one month.



Dr Nanda with portraits of previous Directors dating back to 1900

Following your commitment of support made at our District Synod in September 2021 we have been able, through your generosity, to send donations totalling just over £19000 towards the work. District Methodist Women in Britain, who are also supporting the hospital as their chosen charity, have contributed to this figure, and currently have a further £2788.96 ready to send.

Thank you very much for such a wonderful response to this work. It is important that we continue to raise funds as we are able, as the hospital will be carrying significant debts and will need our ongoing support to reach a sustainable position.

Our partnership with the Diocese of Cuttack is thriving, and this month has seen a visit from the Bishop of the Diocese, Rev N K Nanda, and his wife Jyoti, to the UK to attend the Lambeth Conference. Following the Conference, the Bishop and his wife were able to meet with Rev Graham and Alison Thompson in London, and then spent 4 days in the District, hosted by Rev Alison Richardson in Crediton.

We do hope that the next months might see us able to arrange a short visit by some friends from the Diocese, and that we shall soon be able to plan a return District trip to Orissa.

In the meantime, thank you once again for your financial support of the vital work of the Hospital. Please do continue to send your donations into the District Office, gift aided if possible; you will be helping to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable people, and demonstrating supportive partnership in the wonderful work already being done.

Deborah Kirk, on behalf of the World Church Committee



Front view of the hospital



Interior female surgical ward



Female recovery room



Photographs of progress, August 2022