

Hope and Light

Description

This has been an incredible week. We had three very long days in which we saw and experienced things I hadn't expected. I just keep thinking, "Taunya, you're not in Kansas anymore!" (Or Rexburg)

On Wednesday we returned to meet with Raj Kumar, the community leader of Kalyanpuri (the area where the woman was making poop patties, where we met the ex-deputy mayor of Delhi with the orange office) to finalize the blanket project we are coordinating. He kindly offered us refreshments while we discussed our plans. We looked at the area he was planning to store the 5000 blankets while waiting to distribute them in an orderly fashion and then we walked over to the neighborhood hospital to meet the director to see if there were any needs we might be able to meet. Of course we were offered tea. No thank you. Coffee? No thank you. Hot water? No thank you. Here is some spiced

buttermilk. What? No thank—OK. Thank you. We still haven't tasted it.



Spiced Buttermilk-ginger, cilantro, cumin and hot peppers

After visiting the hospital we returned to Raj Kumar's office to wait until lunch was ready. He then escorted us down the alley to his son's home. We walked up the steep narrow stairway and ducked into what was kind of like a tiny mudroom and went through the doorway into, wait, this is the bedroom. They had four chairs set up at a small coffee table where the four of us ate while our hosts watched and kept giving us more food. It was all very delicious but I couldn't help but feel uncomfortable eating while they hosted knowing how little they have. We were told that they would be offended if we declined though, so we tried to enjoy their generosity.



Luncheon in the pink and green bedroom



Market in Kalyanpuri



Colorful fruits and vegetables

The next day we were able to meet with the leaders of the Asha Deep Foundation that runs a Catholic school, orphanage, vocational training center and schools in slums. They are especially active in helping women and children from abusive situations. They are doing so much good here in Delhi. Asha means hope and Deep is light. They are striving to bring hope and light to those that have little of either.

When we arrived at the school they greeted us with marigold garland "leis" and a song. We were escorted to the office where we were offered, you guessed it, refreshments. It included a savory biscuit called vada. Quite tasty. We then saw their presentation and toured the facility and then were served lunch at their home. We enjoyed a variety of dishes including two types of fish, one fried and one that was in a curry sauce. It was funny because just the day before when we saw lots of fish at the street market I wondered who ate fish and how it was prepared. I guess **we** do!



Taunya receiving a garland

After lunch we went to the site of one of their small schools that was in a "rag picker" community. We were interested to see what was being done and what might possibly be done to improve living conditions. They earn about 50 rupees a day which amounts to about 70 cents. Of course everyone in a family works although no one under 14 is supposed to work because of child labor laws. They live among the mountains of recyclable trash.



Entering the Rag Picker Community



The School



The Adorable Children



Their Homes

Following this visit we went to the vocational school for underprivileged girls, youth and women. Part of the goal is to break the cycle of poverty through education and training. Here they offer classes in computers, sewing and beauty salon skills. The girls we met were delightful and working toward success. Women and girls in India are very undervalued and devalued.



Styling Hair



Some of the orphans/abuse victims
reciting the school theme for us

On Saturday we went to the Model Town slums to check on the five Reverse Osmosis stations that were supposed to be up and running. For the most part they were and that was good news because there are an additional 15 that are supposed to be installed but there have been some problems and delays with this project.



RO unit and building



Yay, it works!



We rode in this e-rickshaw to the next location

These days of visits were long and exhausting. The travel times going from South Delhi to Northeast Delhi is about 1 hour and 15 minutes of congested streets. With horns honking, cars driving the wrong way on the freeway, broken down vehicles, ambulances, bikes, carts, horses, cows, rickshaws (electric, auto, and pedal), scooters, cars, buses, trucks and motorcycles there is always something to see. Talking with people through an interpreter or listening intently to understand their English is hard work. Then you add to that the poverty, filth, and new things to see and it is pretty intense.

http://firstthreeodds.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/IMG_3638.mp4

The people are so kind and the children so sweet. Everyone treats us like we are very important people and we know that we are just pretty average. It's funny how people want to have their picture taken with us and how the children in these communities want to try out their English on us and kind of dare each other to approach us. I'm sure we are quite the novelty on these back roads of Delhi. We are blessed to be here serving in India. Although we can't directly share the light of the gospel maybe we

can bring hope through clean water, blankets, computers and school supplies and change lives for the better.

Other interesting sights this week...



Floral finish on refrigerators
sold on the curb outside the
shop

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I didn't expect to see horses
on the road in India



One of many stray dogs



A cute calf with a burlap blanket



One of the monkeys in the park along with the calf and other cows



Unexpected familiar shop

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