

Link Letter No.9 November 2015

Dear friends,

This Sunday* morning's routine...

We are doing the washing because our helper is away looking after her sister, but we are short of tap water due to limited fuel and reduced tanker deliveries so will get water to fill the washing machine with buckets from the well, and the power is scheduled to be off from 10am-2pm. Better get moving! We also need to get cash to pay the rent, and the ATM only works when the power is on because the bank can't get fuel for the generator at the moment. The area where the bank is, 'group 7', has load-shedding from 11am this morning, so we must get to the ATM before that. We will boil the kettle and keep hot water in a flask so we can make drinks all day without using our remaining bit of cylinder gas.

Phew! We just made it – and the power did not go off according to schedule, but might do any time now! Hey ho! Life is never boring here, but it is maybe a little frustrating now and then.

(*Sunday is our Saturday, because we worshipped with our Nepali church yesterday.)



The damage caused to the hospital by the earthquake



Dan and Phillipa Munday
CMS mission partners
Nepal

Dan and Phillipa Munday are CMS mission partners living and working in Nepal. Phillipa is head of student support at Kathmandu International Study Centre (KISC), and Dan is exploring opportunities to develop palliative care.

Greetings from Kathmandu!

November 8 is a sunny day and the temperature has dropped a few degrees this week although we are still not wearing coats.

Nepal is struggling at the moment with a political crisis, which is having a very significant impact on the economy and on people's daily lives. The lack of fuel we mentioned above results from a blockade on the border with India. Very little fuel has arrived for over a month, since Nepal adopted a new constitution – which had been eight years in the making. Nepal is a multi-ethnic country and some of the groups believe the new constitution marginalises them. The view from Kathmandu is that India has imposed an “unofficial blockade” in support of the protesting groups along the border, who are blocking some of the border crossings and there has been violence and a number of deaths related to the protests. Nepal is

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Trying to get fuel through to Nepal...

surrounded on three sides by India and relies on it for most of its supplies but is now trying to get some fuel from China along a road severely damaged by the earthquake. This seems to be really a token gesture and not a truly viable solution because of the difficult terrain and the distances the oil would need to come.

Little has been reported in the international press, so you might not know about this situation, but this is something which Nepal did not need, just six months on from the devastating earthquake. If you want to read more we would suggest following this link: <http://goo.gl/XRrHYK>

Our biggest news is that Dan has finally been granted his registration with the Nepal Medical Council so he can start doing clinical work. Many thanks for praying about that. It has taken a long time but we have got there in the end. All things happen in God's perfect time.

Dan is now installed as a member of the International Nepal Fellowship (INF) and has a palliative care office to share with his team. It's great to be part of the wider INF team and that a real vision for palliative care is developing in the organisation. Working in partnership with the Nepalese Association for Palliative Care (NAPCare) we in INF are leading a needs assessment for palliative care. However, we are firstly doing a survey of all the palliative care that happens in Nepal so that we can be clear what is available. We will then survey hospitals to find the numbers of patients they have who require palliative care. We have recruited a researcher for the needs assessment and a nurse who will be training and developing her skills in specialist palliative care and working as a resource for mission hospitals in Nepal.



Empty roads...

We are also developing a small project to explore the needs of people with chronic illness and the frail elderly who live in earthquake affected areas. Last week, Dan and a colleague should have been travelling to a rural earthquake affected area to take this project forward but alas the fuel blockade meant that this has had to be postponed. This is frustrating for us, but more seriously the effects of this blockade are extremely serious for people living in these areas.



World Hospice Day

Reconstruction cannot take place because materials cannot be taken in because of a lack of fuel. Aid agencies are warning of a humanitarian crisis as winter approaches fast and people do not have the shelter they need.

At Kathmandu International Study Centre (KISC), Phillipa is enjoying the time to develop the learning support faculty, with fewer distractions and other commitments this year. It is so good to be able to spend time with individual students and see them flourish and gain confidence, as

they benefit from personalised coaching. I have two dedicated teaching rooms this year, one each for primary and secondary, which is also a great help in delivering support sessions and having all the resources ready to hand. We have also been blessed with short-term gap year



Gap year students

volunteers from Australia, France and Scotland to help out working with some of the students. I do feel the students at KISC get a really good deal!

For over a year, KISC has been looking for a chair of its board and – to cut a long story short – Dan has agreed to take on this role from this month for two years. He is looking forward to being more involved with KISC and serving the KISC community in this way.



The KISC swimming gala

As Dan has been doing relatively little clinical work since we came to Nepal, he has arranged to do a locum back in the UK for five weeks over Christmas and the New Year. This will enable him to keep his palliative care practice up to date and will help him to maintain his license to practice. So we will be travelling back on 19 December. It will be lovely to spend Christmas with family as the last couple of years we were in Nepal. Phillipa will return for the beginning of term in January and Dan will follow a couple of weeks later.

Please thank God with us:

- For Dan's medical registration.
- That we have been able to settle in after our return in July from home assignment.
- For the new members of staff Dan has been able to appoint and the ongoing opportunities in developing palliative care.
- For the ongoing opportunities for Phillipa to develop student support at KISC, and the students with whom she works.

Please pray for:

- The situation in Nepal, that there would be a quick resolution and that the Nepali people will be able to build a free and fair society.
- Those at extreme risk because of the blockade and that a humanitarian disaster can be averted.
- The ongoing work of KISC and Phillipa and Dan's involvement with the school. Staffing needs for next year include teachers of English, History and ICT.
- Dan as he settles into undertaking more clinical work at Bir Hospital.
- Palliative care needs assessment project and our new staff.

We would love to wish you a very Happy Christmas!

Lots of love

Dan and Phillipa

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