

Friends of Ludhiana Christmas Letter 2015

Isaiah 9:6-7 King James Version (KJV) “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Dear Friends of Ludhiana,

I realise that many of you have heard little of our activity since my last Christmas letter in 2014. The reason for this is that Heather remains off work and the trustees, who are all volunteers with many other activities and responsibilities, do not have the time to produce the News Bulletins and Prayer Diaries that Heather used to prepare and circulate regularly. We do apologise for this and we hope that this letter will help to bring you up-to-date with our activities.

Nepal Earthquake



On 25th April an earthquake of 8.1 on the Richter scale hit Nepal. The epicentre was 90 miles from Kathmandu. It caused immense damage and an estimated 8,000 people were killed and 20,000 injured.

Shortly after the event, Dr Abraham Thomas organized a group of doctors from CMC who went to help with the treatment of injured survivors of the earthquake. Max Marble [chairman of Friends of Ludhiana United States] interviewed two of the doctors who went from CMC and this very moving interview is available to view via a link to the Friends of Ludhiana UK website. Supporters of Friends of Ludhiana UK raised a sum of £1134 to help fund this work among the victims of the earthquake and the Trustees increased this donation to £1500 which was sent to Ludhiana.

General information

The news from CMC has been encouraging. At the last Governing Body meeting in September, it was reported that the number of patients treated has increased, the income has increased and the expenditure has decreased. While the amount of money borrowed by CMC seems very large to our British expectations, even this amount has decreased slightly in the past year. The Director of CMC, Dr Abraham Thomas, completed seven years in post in March 2015. The by-laws call for the Director to serve for a period of seven years but this is extendable by up to

three years. At the March Governing Body meeting Dr Thomas agreed to an extension to his contract – much to the acclaim of the members of the Governing Body.

A retrospective look at the changes over the last seven years shows considerable expansion of services and major changes to the buildings of the hospital.

These include the provision of an excellent Cardiology service backed up by comprehensive Cardio-thoracic surgery accommodated in modern, well-equipped wards which put those in the UK to shame. The haematology service has developed the provision of bone marrow transplants to a degree that is highly admired throughout the country. Oncology has been supported by the provision of new CT and MRI scanners and a new linear accelerator (*picture on the right*).



Neurology continues to blossom under the direction of Professor Jeyaraj Pandian and the work he has done with stroke has received world-wide acclaim. With the financial help of Friends of Ludhiana UK the computer system in the hospital has been upgraded and several electrical transformers have been acquired which help to guarantee the electrical power supply to the hospital [power cuts are extremely common in Ludhiana and these can be catastrophic for hospital services]. This year has seen the opening of a new labour area with 25 beds in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and a new nursery area with 30 beds.

Bilga General Hospital joins CMC



One major change that has occurred during this year has been the acquisition of the General Hospital in Bilga [a town between Ludhiana and Jalandhar].

Bilga General Hospital has been developed by a group of doctors from the Bilga area but who are now based in the UK, supported by other Punjabi philanthropists. Professor Robert Arnott, who is based in Oxford, is the

chairman of the Bilga Support Group.

The hospital currently has 36 beds and a wide range of supporting services. CMC has taken a 99 year lease on the Bilga Hospital and now manages, and is seeking to expand, the clinical services provided there.

CMC continues to offer treatment to all-comers irrespective of whether they are able to pay for the services. This marks out the institution from the many private healthcare providers in Ludhiana where the ability to pay is paramount. Friends of Ludhiana UK recognizes this and has sought to support those unable to pay for their treatment via the Good Samaritan Fund which helps to fund the poorest and most needy patients attending CMC. We are conscious that Jesus always had a heart for the poor and disadvantaged and we seek to reflect His love and grace. Over the past few years several hundred patients have been helped by the financial support offered by this fund.

Friends of Ludhiana accounts

Financially, Friends of Ludhiana UK remains in good shape. The last audited accounts were for the 12 months to 31 December 2014 [available on the Charity Commission's website]. These showed a total income in excess of £49,000 [which compares with £41,000 in 2013]. Almost £37,000 was sent in donations to CMC. 'Home' expenditure has been reduced considerably from £21,182 in 2013 to £7,176 in 2014. These trends have been continued during 2015 although our full accounts will not be available until early next year.

I am grateful to the other trustees of Friends of Ludhiana UK who have provided invaluable help and support during the last year. The trustees have met formally on three occasions during 2015. Especially, I would like to thank Peter Clark who has expertly managed the finance of the society, and also Rosemary Tootle who has striven to update our membership and circulation list and has tried to manage the Friends of Ludhiana website. Maybe this is an opportunity to encourage those who have access to the internet to visit our website since we do try to post recent news and needs for prayer.

We thank you for your continued support. We appreciate your financial gifts but, above all, we value your prayers for the work at CMC. On behalf of the Friends of Ludhiana Council, I also take this opportunity to wish you all a blessed and Happy Christmas and New Year.

Dr Keith R Hine
Chairman Friends of Ludhiana

Please remember us this year when you do your Christmas shopping online by visiting our website www.friendsofludhiana.org.uk