



## IREF (UK) News Letter – February 2011

### **IREF now broadcasting in India**

IREF has been reaching millions of people in Andhra Pradesh for over 60 years. Television has now become an accepted medium for proclaiming the message of Christ. *Subhavartha* (which means *Good News* in Telugu) is a privately owned TV channel. It was recently launched to spread the Gospel in Andhra Pradesh. In August 2010, IREF became a partner with *Subhavartha TV* and has broadcasting a programme called “Jeevaharam”, meaning “*Bread of Life*.” It features Emmanuel Rebba’s preaching, in IREF’s Repalle Church, every Sunday morning. The people of Andhra Pradesh are able to watch the programme, then write in or place a telephone call to share their personal prayer requests with IREF.

*Chip Moore writes:*

The Lord has opened a door for IREF to begin broadcasting their services via satellite and the internet to hundreds of millions of people across India.

It was a thrill for me to travel to India last November and bring video gear for taping and editing the Sunday services. God answered the prayers of many as all the gear made it there safe and sound, and I was able to train 12 men in the short six days I was there. It helps to have hungry students, eager to learn! While I was there, we were also able to redo the PA system in the church for much clearer sound.



I was able to witness some of the existing religious broadcasts while I was in India. Sadly, many of the programs were like those in the USA - not Biblical, and simply asking for money. My heart is encouraged that the truth of the Gospel will go forth from IREF, given freely - just as Christ offers it to us.

Please pray that the Holy Spirit will touch people who might just be channel surfing on a Sunday morning. Pray that they will be convicted of their need for salvation. I loved working with these men who are eager to be a part of spreading the gospel. So, pray too that they will continue to grow in their abilities and creative use of this open door for the Gospel in India.

### **A faithful evangelist called home**

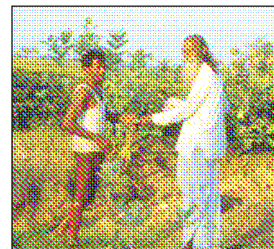
On November 14<sup>th</sup> last year, IREF said goodbye to a very great and dear man, the last of the older generation of IREF leaders, Prakasa Rao. As a young

man, Prakasa Rao gave his life to Christ through the preaching of IREF’s founder, Prasada Rao Rebba. Prakasa Rao’s devout Hindu parents had tried to poison his food. But God saved his life by prompting a dog to jump onto the meal table to eat the food that his parents had poisoned! The dog died, warning Prakasa Rao of his parents’ plan before he could eat that meal. Through prayer, persistence, and the power of the Holy Spirit, Prakasa Rao’s parents and entire family were later saved.



For 60 years, Prakasa Rao walked faithfully, and completed his task of bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to villages and people who had never heard the Truth. He saw many miracles – the deaf heard, the blind saw, and several who had died were brought back to life in Christ’s name!

Prakasa Rao loyally served his Saviour. He walked thousands upon thousands of miles over his lifetime, proclaiming the name of Jesus and spreading the Good News about him to thousands, if not millions, of people.



He planted the Rudravaram Rural Evangelical Church and was blessed to see the concrete church building before he died. The night before he passed away, he told his daughters that his time had come and he was going to see Prasada Rao. The next day, he died. We remember his legacy, and that of Prasada Rao and Lydia Rebba, and celebrate the warm welcoming he must have received in heaven!

### **Many saved in Machilipatnam**

Monsoon rains and flooding last autumn made it almost impossible to conduct Gospel meetings in a town called Bandar near Machilipatnam. IREF staff worked hard before the first meeting was due to start, trying to pump water out of the grounds where the Gospel meetings were to be held. But the rainwater had saturated the ground to such an extent that it was impossible to find any dry ground. Just as the meetings were about to be cancelled, Emmanuel Rebba received a call from someone who had located

open-air grounds nearby, large enough to host the Gospel crusades for three days.

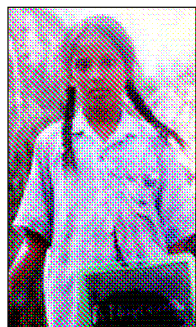
Astonishingly, about 20,000 people attended each night from surrounding villages! Over 250 three-wheeled motorised rickshaws were parked in the grounds - a sight to behold! The town elders noted that this was the first time in their town's history that such a large crowd had gathered for any event. Furthermore, 90% of the people in attendance each night came forward in response to the Gospel call!

*"I was amazed to see what God has done here in this place tonight," Dee Rebba reported. "It is the power of prayer that makes it possible for God's Word to thrive; and it is the Holy Spirit who lights people's hearts to be on fire for Jesus!"*

Evangelists and Bible ladies had fasted and prayed for three days, in faith, that the Lord would move among the lost. *"Praise the Lord! I am learning so much by being here in India and seeing what it truly means to be faithful and serve the Lord whole-heartedly,"* Dee Rebba writes. *"Thank you, IREF friends and family, for standing with us in prayer and support as we spread the amazing Good News, so that together we glorify God's name."*

### **A remarkable story**

"Greetings in the Name of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ! Thank you for giving me an opportunity to share my testimony with you. My birth name was Naga Devatha (I was named after the Hindu snake goddess) and I am from a village called Kothapalem. I am the second of three daughters born into a Hindu family. My parents have worked for many years as labourers in fish ponds near our village. Their meagre income was never enough to provide for our daily needs but they were devoted to making sure my sisters and I received a good education so that we could have a better life.



When I was 8 years old, a little friend from our village told my family about IREF and the Lydia Children's Home. Because my parents' poverty was so desperate, they enrolled us in IREF's Repalle School. I was in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at the time and had a very hard time adjusting to being away from home. It was especially difficult to get used to the daily routines at IREF, and the focus on prayer and the message of Jesus Christ. My sisters and I thought about running away from IREF many times but the love and care provided was overwhelming. We were treated like a part of a family. The Rebbas made us feel like their own

children. We made friends and adjusted to our new life.

Our hearts were softened and we began to enjoy attending the Church services and daily devotions. I passed 10<sup>th</sup> Class in 2003 and went onto IREF's Repalle Christian Junior College to further my studies. During my second year (equivalent to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade), I accepted Jesus as my personal Saviour. What an amazing day! I was baptized on March 4<sup>th</sup> 2006. That day my name was changed to *Blessy*, for God had shown me His mercy and blessings. I left my sinful life and Hindu roots behind and now have a future in Christ!

After Junior College, I joined the Bachelor of Commerce program at IREF's Repalle Christian College. During my second year, my father passed away. It was a hard time for me and my sisters; but, by God's grace and the encouragement of Emmanuel and Dee Rebba, I went on to finish my undergraduate studies and pass my exams.

I went home to my village. My mother decided to arrange my marriage but she was looking for Hindu grooms. I did not want to marry a man who followed Hindu customs and worshipped idols, so I went back to IREF and sought guidance from the Rebbas again. Emmanuel gave me the opportunity to join the Bachelors of Education (teachers training) programme. Today, I am a Teacher at IREF's John's High School – the same school that changed my life.

I pray that the Lord will use me to make a difference in the lives of my students, just like my mentors and teachers at IREF did for me when I was younger. The



opportunities we received through IREF were far more than we ever imagined. We have hope in our Lord because of the love and compassion he shows to us. My sisters and I are believers of Christ - and this is the greatest blessing of our lives! We are so thankful to IREF for helping so many neglected children and raising us up spiritually, physically, mentally and socially. I would never have heard about the grace and love of Jesus Christ, become a child of God, or become an educated woman, without IREF. I am eternally grateful for your support, prayers and love.

Your loving child and sister in Christ, Blessy"

***Once again, thank you for your invaluable on-going support for the Lord's work in India.***

**David Hunt** [Chairman, IREF (UK)]