

## India 2010

It's hard to believe that it is almost two years since the last UK team visited IREF in India. A large team is planning to make the long journey again in January 2010. The group, so far, will include two pastors, two doctors, four nurses, two dentists, one optician and a number of others to assist with the clinic.

The pastors will be part of a joint UK/US team teaching at the annual Bible conference and evening Gospel meetings in Repalle and beyond.

The medical team hopes to see around 1,000 children over the two-week visit. As before, this will include health checks, dental extractions, treatment of simple skin conditions and some public health advice. We also hope to visit the smaller satellite orphanages and the Child Development Centres.

Everyone on the UK team would value your prayers and where possible your financial support. It is expensive to travel to India and we need to cover all our costs in the country, including internal travel, board and lodging. In addition, we would also like to make a significant donation to help cover the cost of the Bible conference and Gospel meetings. Our target is to raise £2,000 per team member (i.e. £24,000-£28,000 in total, depending on the final size of the UK team).

Donate online with **justgiving**

It is possible to give in a number of ways.

- **If you are a non-taxpayer**, a charitable trust or church, please send a cheque to our Honorary Treasurer, Jimmy Fraser, 22 Savoy Park, Ayr KA7 2XA Scotland, indicating that your donation is for the India 2010 visit.
- **If you are a taxpayer**, to enable us to recover Gift Aid on your donation, please give via our own dedicated part of the *Just Giving* website, [www.justgiving.com/irefmedical2010](http://www.justgiving.com/irefmedical2010). *Just Giving* will automatically add the Gift Aid element to your donation, saving our Treasurer a lot of administrative work.

## News Update from Trustees

At our IREF(UK) Trustees Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> June, tribute was paid to the outstanding contribution that **Ian Leitch** has made to the promotion of IREF in the UK as one of its founding trustees. Either directly or indirectly, all of us involved in the work of IREF owe our involvement to Ian, humanly speaking. Ian was invited to take a team from the UK to India in 1996

and, as a result of that visit, IREF(UK) was formed on our return. Over the past 13 years, we have all appreciated Ian's enthusiasm, passion, wisdom, sense of humour and endless stream of stories in our Trustees meetings. Now that he has reached the biblical age of 'three score years and ten', he feels it is the right time for him to stand down from his responsibilities as a trustee, but he has assured us all that he will remain fully committed to, and be involved in, the work of IREF for many years to come. So, thank you, Ian, for your great fellowship in the Lord's work over these past 13 years, which has been much appreciated by us all.

Jimmy Fraser, our Treasurer, reported encouraging **financial figures for 2008**. A record **£51,030.66** was remitted to IREF(India) during the course of the year, far exceeding our previous best figure of £33,401 for 2007. It means that since IREF(UK)'s formation in 1996, more than **£280,000** has been raised to support the Lord's work in India, for which we give him all the praise and glory.

We were pleased to hear that sufficient funds have been raised or pledged from the UK to support IREF's **two nurses** for a further 12 months. We also have sufficient funds in hand to construct **IREF(UK)'s first church building** in India.

We have been encouraged by the take up for our **Present Aid** scheme which we launched just before Christmas last year. Over £700 has been raised in this way.

The day after our meeting, we were thrilled to receive news of a **large legacy** that has been left to IREF(UK). This is the first legacy that IREF(UK) has received, so please pray for the trustees as we consider how the Lord would have us best use the money. We hope to give further details in our next newsletter.

## Gospel Meetings in Dubai

Earlier this year, Dr Emmanuel Rebba was able to travel to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates to conduct Gospel Meetings in the compound of the Holy Trinity Church. Many of the Gulf States have a large Indian population of expatriates.



**A wonderful witness**

In the early 1950s, Koteswara Rao travelled from his village to see a movie in Repalle. By the time he arrived at the theatre, the movie had already started. So he decided to wait until the next show, but wasn't sure what to do in the meantime. Koteswara Rao heard singing across the street and decided to see what was going on. A Gospel meeting was taking place, led by IREF's founder, Rev. Prasada Rao Rebba. As Koteswara Rao listened to the Word of God, he sensed God's Holy Spirit speaking to him. That night, he couldn't sleep because his mind was troubled over all that he had heard about God's gift of salvation. So the next day, Koteswara Rao returned to hear the Gospel message for a second time. That night, he gave his life to the Lord.

Koteswara Rao and his wife left their Hindu past behind them in 1955. Having been baptized by Prasada Rao Rebba, they were treated as outcasts by their families, friends and their Hindu community. They were even stoned for becoming Christians. But Koteswara Rao continued to pray for his family's conversion, without ceasing. In the meantime, he invited Prasada Rao to his village to conduct Gospel meetings, something that his village community strongly opposed. But by God's grace, Koteswara Rao's prayers were answered. All of his family became Christians.



Koteswara Rao received Bible and evangelism training from Prasada Rao, and in 1956, he began preaching the Gospel in his own village and four neighbouring ones.

As his journey with Christ began, Koteswara Rao experienced many trials including the death of his only son to leukaemia, the death of his youngest daughter, and shortly afterwards the death of his wife. Many taunted Koteswara Rao saying that these hardships had come to him because the Hindu gods were cursing him for receiving Christ. But Koteswara Rao never stopped trusting in the Lord, and always remained faithful to his Saviour, Jesus Christ. As a result, many people came to know of God's grace and love through him. He broke through many caste barriers and continued to show the power of Christ through his dedication to the Lord.



In March this year, Koteswara Rao was called home to be with his Lord and Master. Before he died, he had

trained three evangelists to continue ministering to the people in his community. Those of us who were privileged to have met him during our visits to India will remember him as a kind and courteous man, one of the real stalwarts of IREF from its earliest days. We praise God for every remembrance of him.

## Graduation Testimonies

Earlier this year, several students shared their testimony at a Sunday service in Repalle shortly before graduating from IREF's Degree College. Here are some of the stories, as reported by Dee Rebba.

- *A high caste Hindu student enrolled in College as a freshman. During her first year, she came to know the Lord, and was baptised during the Gospel Meetings this past January. She is afraid to go home for the summer break because her family does not know about her new life in Christ. She was worried about her fellowship with God and her relationship with God during summer break because her family are devout Hindus. As I began to talk to her, tears were pouring down her face as she explained her background. Her parents were separated a long time ago and now she and her mother stay with her grandmother. Now that she has come to know the Lord, she desires unity within her family, which includes bringing reconciliation between her parents. What a witness - praise God!*
- *Another student said that for nine years she had been privileged to stay at IREF. Along with her education, she also came to know Christ and declared her salvation through baptism. Her biggest fear is graduation and moving on with life at home because she wouldn't find the care, the love, or the fellowship that she has received at IREF all these years.*
- *One student said she felt like leaving several times when she first joined the school because of all the worship. But, after hearing messages and teachings of the Gospel, she also came to know the Lord, was baptised, and now wants to stay at IREF as long as she can.*
- *A student's father arrived early to visit his daughter on a Sunday morning, but after listening to the message in church, he was compelled by the Holy Spirit to give his life to Christ. After the service was over, he asked to be baptised. In the evening, Emmanuel and few pastors took him to the Krishna River and baptized him. This man belonged to a Hindu family.*
- *A second year college student who got saved here after coming to IREF started praying for her grandfather who was a long time alcoholic. After witnessing to him, her grandfather gave his life to the Lord and took baptism.*

We continue to praise God for the work he is doing through IREF and for your support for his work.

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