

Preaching the Word - Caring for the Brotherhood

Asia-Pacific Christadelphian Bible Mission – September 2021

India

India is a vast country with a population of nearly 1.4 billion. There are also many local and tribal languages. This, of course, makes for challenges in preaching the Gospel. However the number and location of Christadelphians in India has increased. There are now 2,250 brothers and sisters in nearly 100 ecclesias in India. Of these ecclesias, only three use English for their meetings so it is now very much a local language country, just like the many ecclesias in Africa.

India has also been severely impacted by the many waves of the Covid-19 pandemic. Covid has directly affected our brothers and sisters with about 450 Covid infections and 18 deaths amongst our Indian ecclesias. It is not just the older members who have passed away, but in some cases both Christadelphian parents have died leaving orphaned children. Three sisters who had been baptised in the last year also fell asleep in Jesus. There has been a significant amount of welfare assistance provided by the ACBM for our brothers and sisters who have no work and no income due to lockdowns or enforced isolation and who would not have been able to meet rent, food and medical costs without help.

With no visits from overseas, the Indian brothers and sisters quickly demonstrated their ability to meet the challenge of running their memorial meetings, Bible studies and praise and thanksgiving gatherings using technology. Mobile phones, Zoom, Facebook, WhatsApp and similar technology has been used to connect to each other and with the worldwide Christadelphian community. This connection is not just in English but in local languages shared between countries including Hindi and Bangla.

The local brothers and sisters have continued to actively preach and there have been over 100 baptisms in the past year. Vibrant ecclesias have developed in many locations including Tribal areas and in Tripura state, which is remote state of India to the east of Bangladesh. See the photo below of the new ecclesia in Longtharai in Tripura state. It was this ecclesia that lost the three sisters mentioned above and their faith remains strong even in the face of such adversity.



Although travel to India may not be possible for months or even years, those of us in western countries can still be active in our help for our Indian brothers and sisters. Please remember them constantly in your prayers. Financial assistance is best directed through the ACBM area teams closely familiar with the local needs. Direct payments to individuals in response to emails appeals can cause doubling up of funding and lack of equity. You can also join in various zoom meetings and activities conducted in English (often with local translation). You can follow us on Instagram at [acbm_gogivegrow](https://www.instagram.com/acbm_gogivegrow). Information is also available on the ACBM webpage acbm.org.au, use the links to the Victorian mission area and then to the various India regions.

If you would like to be involved or join one of the zoom meetings, please use the following email links for more information

india@acbm.org.au (bro Graham Reeve)

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