



Herald Hindustan

Official Newsletter of Projects Abroad INDIA FEBRUARY 2011 Issue No. 32

Lice Treatment Camp @ Love & Care

Turn over the Pages for More Pictures....



02	DIRECTOR'S VOICE	10	Min beskrivelse af veterinærprojektet i Watrap, Indien
03	INDIA INSIDE AND OUT - MASI MAGAM	SOCIAL EVENTS	
NEWS AND UPDATE		12	UPCOMING WEEKEND TRIP TO RAMESHWARAM
04	PROJECT UPDATE ON CARE	13	LICE TREATMENT CAMP & PHOTOS
05	WHAT'S ON?	14	DESTINATION OF THE MONTH - MUTTOM
06	BIRTHDAYS & DONATIONS	15	INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT INDIA
07	NEW ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES	16	STAFF CONTACT LIST
VOLUNTEERS' CORNER		17	VOLUNTEER CONTACT LIST
08	Mig Om Indien	20	SOCIAL MEDIA SECTION

AASANTU..

Welcome all to the warmer days. Just wondering.... how long do you stay out of your home country? Is it always a feeling of rushing to get back to your country after your expedition, or is it a heavy heart you leave behind? The second should be you if you are eclectic in nature and it is definitely the latter for volunteers who visit India. Initially on arrival it is shock and confusion with the chaos around but slowly you start wondering how beautifully laced a structure and culture there is beneath the chaos. People are not always complaining, we crowd into a bus and we never complain. We truly don't complain about an additional few embarking somewhere on the way. We like to stay as a close bind, this could be strange for a foreign visitor but this feeling binds one billion people amidst all the differences they have, be it the colour, the religion, or the social class they come from. I have heard volunteers complaining of the food but subconsciously get drawn to the Indian palate. They get used to the crowd and the tolerance. They get drawn to this unique human pattern where people instantly try to relate to strangers, sometimes they even assign and address strangers like " BHAIYYA or Anna meaning brother, DIDI or Akka meaning sister, or so on so for uncles and aunts. Is there not a feeling of instant kinship? Keep your minds open and there is a lot to take and cherish from India.

"If there is one place on the face of this Earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest days when Man began the dream of existence, it is India." - Romain Rolland. I am sure it is true!!!

Best Wishes,

JAGADISH KUMAR

COUNTRY DIRECTOR – INDIA

PROJECTS ABROAD



Masi Magam..



Maasi Magam or Maasi Makam is one of the most important Tamil Hindu festivals celebrated in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, especially by the Tamil speaking people. Every year, Masi Makam is celebrated on the full moon day of Makam nakshatra (Magam or Magha) on the Tamil month of Masi (February - March). Maasi Makam is also called Masi Pournami and the date of Maasi Magam festival 2011 is 18th February.

On the auspicious day of Maasi Makam, temple idols of Gods are brought to the sea shore and ritually bathed. Thousands of devotees gather to get a glimpse of the holy ritual. After the ritual immersion the idols are returned to the respective temples in huge procession.

On Maasi Makam day, all the households prepare payasam (rice pudding made with milk and sugar) and offer it to Lord Chandra (Moon God). It is believed that offering payasam to Lord Chandra on Maasi Pourmani day attains good health and long life to children.

Maha Maham or Maha Magam Festival : Once in every 12 years, apart from the full moon being in conjunction with the Makam Nakshatram in the month of Maasi, planet Jupiter (Guru or Brihaspati graha) moves in to the Singa Rasi. This Maasi Makam which is considered extremely auspicious is called Maha Maham.

Maasi Makam Festival is observed with much pomp and splendor at Srirangam, Pondicherry, Mahabalipuram, and Kumbakonam and in numerous other temples in Tamil Nadu.



Project Update on Care

The Care Project is one of the pure humanitarian works through which volunteers can bring much change and happiness to children who are really in need. In India there are many varieties of care placements and here we are introducing this special one - Amar Seva Sangam, located in Tenkasi in Tirunelveli district, the southernmost district of Tamil Nadu. This Sangam



specifically works for physically challenged children. The founder Mr. Ramakrishnan, an engineering graduate who was physically fit as a youngster lost his physical movement in an accident during a physical endurance test while attending the Indian Navy officer selection. The doctor Mr. Amar, who treated him after this accident, had confidence in him and encouraged him to go and work with people like himself. It took five years for him to found the organization and he started his Sangam in 1981 in the name of the doctor who treated him.

After 30 years of his team's hard work, now in 2011 this Sangam caters for more than 500 physically challenged children and also for mentally disabled children. Amar Seva Sangam received many awards from the State and Central government of India, for its valuable work. Our volunteers so far have worked teaching the Kindergarten children, conducted activity based teaching for the mentally disabled children and helped with physiotherapy. The service rendered by our volunteers has made changes to many of the children's lives.



What's On...??? - Madurai

Best time to visit the Meenakshi Amman temple is from 09:00 to 11:00 in the morning and from 06:00 to 07:00 in the evening...



The rock-cut temple - Thirupparankundram is open from 05:30 am to 01:00 pm and from 16:00 pm to 21:00 pm. This is the place where you can see White peacocks, a rare variety



Gandhi Museum - the museum where one can see the monuments of Mahatma Gandhi (the great Indian Freedom fighter and leader). The museum will be kept open from 10:00 AM to 13:00 PM and from 14:00 PM to 17:30 PM.



Yoga Classes are held at Gandhi Museum from 06:00 to 07:15 AM in the morning and from 17:00 to 18:00 PM in the Evening. And there is a session only for girls from 10:30 to 11:30 AM in the Morning. Interested people can attend these classes.



Birthday Celebrations

Projects Abroad India's heartfelt greetings to all the volunteers who are all celebrating their birthdays during the month of March 2011..

Ms Sara GROENER—9 April

Mr Benjiv SANDHU—10 April

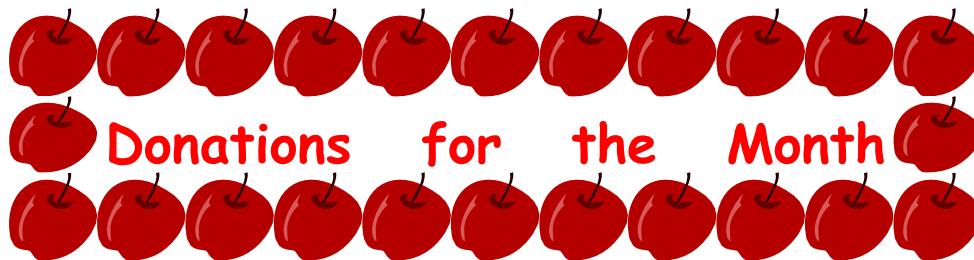
Ms Chiara POBBIELSKI— 10 April

Ms Bethany ECCLES— 19 April

Ms Joy CLAVEL—22 April

Ms Aske HOCK—22 April

Ms Mihee BANG— 27 April



Projects Abroad Contribution

As on the placement's request, Projects Abroad contributed 100 Pounds to one of our Care placement - Anbarasi Social Action for the Pongal Celebrations

Volunteer's Contribution

- One of our Care Volunteer – Ms Martine Deleau presented some Aluminum Utensils to Madurai Seva Ashram which worth about 8000 INR.
- Other three volunteers - Ms Rachel Fryer, Samantha Stone and Ms Rita Fryer altogether donated dress materials to about 123 children at Madurai Seva Ashram and that costs 50000 INR.

Mig om Indien



Jeg gik ud af 3.g i sommers og besluttede at holde et friår. Hvad jeg ville bruge dette år på var der ingen tvivl om. Jeg ville bruge det på at samle erfaring til min drømmeuddannelse som dyrlæge. Jeg tog noget praktik i Danmark men besluttede hurtigt, at jeg ville se verden nu hvor jeg havde chancen. Jeg fandt hurtigt Projects Abroad som netop tilbød det jeg allerhelst ville - nemlig at rejse ud og se hvordan dyrlæger arbejder i andre dele af verden. Så jeg besluttede hurtigt at Indien var min

destination. Men hvor nåede jeg at tvivle mange gange: Ville det blive godt? Var tre måneder for lang tid? Ville jeg blive ensom? Ville jeg lære noget? Skulle jeg bare aflyse det hele?

Som svar på det sidste er mit svar til alle andre med same spørgsmål: NEJ gør det! Det er en fantastisk mulighed. Jeg har nu været i Indien i en måned og alle mine tvivlsspørgsmål er blevet gjort til skamme. Jeg bor i Watrap ca. 2 timer fra Madurai. Her bor jeg sammen med en dansk pige, en britisk pige, en tysk dame og en tysk dreng. Jeg kommer til at følges med den tyske dreng og engelske pige alle 3 måneder, mens den tyske dame og danske pige er kommet tre uger senere end os og kører deres eget program. Vi bor hos en dejlig familie, der består af bedstefaren som arbejder; bedstemoren og moren som (på trods af deres lille engelske ordforråd) er dem vi taler mest med; og tre børn som er super søde. Familien har lært mig meget om Indien, indisk mad og indiske traditioner og muligheden for at kunne se en kultur indefra på den måde er helt fantastisk. Dyrlægen vi arbejder hos er også helt fantastisk og meget ivrig efter at lære fra sig. Han lærer os mange ting både om kultur, religion og selvfølgelig om hans arbejde og dyrenes betydning for de lokale bønder. Tingene er meget anderledes her end derhjemme. Der er ingen bedøvelse, ingen laboratorier til at lave test og der er meget uvidenhed blandt de bønder, som vi arbejder med. De mest normale cases er inseminering, kastrering, diarre og vaccinationer. En af dyrlægens hovedopgaver er at uddanne bønderne om dyrenes fodring. Netop manglen på viden om fodring er nemlig en af grundene til, at mange dyr har diarre, hvilket kan have en dødelig udgang på grund af varmen.

Dyrlægen prøver i høj grad at involvere os i sine opgaver og jeg har da også både vaccineret køer, klargjort insemineringspistolen, kastreret geder, givet ormekur til kalve og mærket kalve der stadig var inde i moren. Kastreringen er nok det der er mest chokerende i starten da det forgår ved, at du klemmer sædkanalerne over med en tang - uden bedøvelse.

Men vi har ikke kun været på klinikken. Vi har også været på to veterinærcamps. En planlagt af Projects Abroad, hvor vi var sammen med en veterinærskole fra Madurai. Det var en meget spændende oplevelse. Den anden camp var sammen med den dyrlæge, som vi normalt arbejder med. Veterinærcamps er ture, hvor man tager ud til landsbyerne og tilbyder gratis behandling og vaccination af deres dyr. Det er et forsøg på at hjælpe de fattige bønder, som ellers ikke har råd til at få deres dyr behandlet.

I Indien er en stor bonde en bonde med mere end 10 dyr - det siger lidt om, hvor stor betydning dyrene har for inderne. Dyrene er bøndernes levebrød og derfor er det ikke unormalt, at dyrene er livsforsikrede.

Når man tegner en forsikring af et dyr betyder det, at dyret skal tjekkes af en dyrlæge en gang om året. I tilfælde af død skal dyret obduceres af dyrlægen, så han kan give en dødsattest på, at dyret døde af naturlige årsager. Begge disse ting har også været noget jeg allerede har haft mulighed for at opleve.

Men der er selvfølgelig meget andet end kun dyrlægen og familien - der er også alle de andre frivillige. Hver anden weekend er der weekendture arrangeret af Projects Abroad. Turene går til nogle af de steder i Sydindien som er "must sees". Det er frivilligt om man vil deltage - men gør det! Her har du nemlig muligheden for at møde alle de andre frivillige. Jeg har indtil nu været på to weekendture - en til Kodiakkanal og en til Kanyakumari. Begge gange har jeg nydt det og det har været super hyggeligt.

Alt i alt har den første måned været en fantastisk oplevelse. Selv om jeg måske ikke

kan overføre den medicinske behandling direkte til et job i Danmark, er jeg sikker på, at de erfaringer og oplevelser jeg har haft og vil få i Indien vil hjælpe mig fremover.



Elisabeth BANG | DENMARK

Min beskrivelse af veterinærprojektet i Watrap, Indien

Jeg befinder mig i en landsby ved navn Watrap, beliggende i Tamil Nadu, Indien, to timers kørsel fra Madurai. Jeg er i gang med et veterinærprojekt af en måneds varighed. I dag har jeg været her en uge og har således tre uger igen. Det er en uge, som er gået meget stærkt.

Jeg ankom først på dyreklinikken sammen med en tysk kvinde, hvor der allerede var 3 andre frivillige; en dansk pige, en engelsk pige og en tysk dreng. Da jeg led af jetlag og et enormt kulturchock, var det lidt svært for mig at overskue alle de nye og mærkelige indtryk, som jeg blev bombet med konstant (og stadig bliver). Jeg lærte dog hurtigt at smide mine hævninger fra mig og spørge ind til hvem de andre var og hvor lang tid de havde været her, da det helt klart gjorde det meget nemmere for mig at blive integreret i gruppen. De viste sig jo selvfølgelig at være søde og rare alle sammen, så det var intet problem.

Med hensyn til arbejdet på dyreklinikken, så ved jeg faktisk ikke, hvad jeg havde forestillet mig. Men heldigvis er dyrlægen utrolig venlig og hjælpsom og meget professionel. En typisk dag på klinikken starter kl. 9:15. Dyrlægen kommer mellem 5-30 minutter efter os andre, og så sidder vi og snakker lidt inden de første "cases" ankommer. En typisk dag består af: inseminering af køer, kastrering af geder, vaccination af

hunde og geder, mineraltilskud til køer, hunde og geder, antibiotikabehandlinger af forskellige sygdomme m.m.. Dyrlægen er god til at inkludere os i arbejdet; jeg har f.eks. prøvet at load en insemineringspistol og kastre to geder (man klemmer testiklerne over med en stor tang - uden bedøvelse selvfølgelig!).

Jeg har ingen veterinær-erfaring fra Danmark, og nogle gange er det lidt svært at følge med. Men jeg lærer utroligt meget på klinikken, da både dyrlægen og de andre frivillige er søde til at forklare, hvad der foregår. Igen: Spørg om alt hvad du er i tvivl om, selvom du måske føler dig dum – Du får tusind gange mere ud af det!

Min værtsfamilie er udover al forventning. Den første dag blev jeg budt velkommen af en smilende værtsmoder og hendes datter,



som straks samlede os alle i stuen til en kop te og en "sludder" (de snakker ikke så godt engelsk, så det er begrænset, hvad vi kan snakke om). Moderen er hjemmegående, og faderen arbejder i byen. Ham ser vi ikke så tit, men han er rigtig sød. Måltider og te er meget vigtigt for dem, så man skal ikke være bange for at sulte – tværtimod! Og maden er så lækker, at man ikke kan stoppe med at spise J

Datteren har 3 børn, som er utrolig søde og meget interesserede i hvad vi laver og hvem vi er. Det er virkelig hyggeligt at bo med så stor en familie, som er så gæstfrie og kærlige. Så der er vist ikke noget negativt jeg kan komme i tanker om. Husk værts gave!

I weekenden var vi på en tur ned til sydspidsen af Indien- en tur arrangeret af Projects Abroad. Det var første gang jeg mødte de andre frivillige på de andre projekter omkring og i Madurai. Det var fedt at høre de andre fortælle om deres projekter og lære de andre at kende og have noget fritid. Vi så et palads, et fort, et vandfald, var på stranden og var ude og se et tempel på en ø lige udenfor kysten. Alt i alt en spændende og rigtig hyggelig tur, som giver nogle sjove oplevelser udover det, man oplever i ugens løb på ens placement. Det er lidt ærgerligt, at man ikke kan ses lidt oftere med de andre, men så vil jeg bare glæde mig endnu mere til næste weekendtur.

Min første uge har været over al forventning, og jeg er super glad for at jeg valgte at rejse med Projects Abroad, og kan kun anbefale det varmt til fremtidige frivillige i Indien. Jeg håber vi ses!



Ulla HANNIBAL | DENMARK

Upcoming Weekend – Rameshwaram



Rameshwaram is an island situated in the Gulf of Mannar at the very tip of the Indian peninsula. A very important pilgrim centre for Indians, Rameshwaram is the place from where Lord Rama built a bridge across the sea to rescue his consort Sita, from her abductor, Ravana. This is also the place where Rama worshipped Lord Shiva to cleanse away the sin of killing Ravana.

Rameshwaram is also popularly referred to as the 'Benaras of the south'. In order to attain Moksha it is believed that the visit to Rameshwaram is mandatory.

Mythological History :-

Sri Lanka is at a distance of 24 km from Rameshwaram. In fact the entire area of Rameshwaram is associated with various incidents from the Ramayana. Rameshwaram is one of the most visited pilgrim sites in India.

Location and Area :-

The religious island is in the shape of a conch. The Ramanathaswamy Temple occupies a large area of Rameshwaram. This masterpiece of Dravidian architecture boasts the largest temple corridor in India. Different rulers built the Ramanathaswamy Temple over a period of time starting from the 12th century.

Pilgrimage Attractions of Rameshwaram :-

- **Ramanathaswamy Temple** Ramanathaswamy Temple was completed in the 17th century. Situated close to the sea on the eastern side of the island, this temple is famous for its 1200 gigantic granite columns, the 54 metre tall gopuram (gate-tower) and 1220 metre of magnificent corridors. The flamboyant and embellished columns render fame to the temple. The Temple contains twenty-two wells where the taste of the water from each well is different.



- **Agnitheertham** 100 metre away from the temple is Agnitheertham, where Rama worshipped Lord Shiva, to absolve himself from the killing Ravana.

- **Gandamadana Parvatham** The imprint of Lord Rama's feet placed on a Chakra (wheel) is found in this shrine which is at the highest point on the island at 2 km from Rameshwaram.

- **Dhanushkodi** named after Rama's bow, is at the eastern end of the island. The boulders around the sea between Sri Lanka and this place known as Adam's bridge, are believed to be used by Hanuman to reach across to Sri Lanka. Dhanushkodi was completely destroyed by the cyclones of 1964. Kothandaramaswamy Temple is the only salvage of the cyclone. Idols of Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman and Vibhishana (brother of Ravana), can be seen here.

LICE TREATMENT CAMP



MUTTOM

Muttom is small village situated in the Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu. Although Muttom is also one of the areas of Tamil Nadu that was badly affected by the Tsunami it has slowly recovered from the trauma. Muttom is connected to different places by road and rail. Muttom is becoming a centre of attraction



for many nature lovers because of the magnificent beach, surrounded with rocky hills and coconut groves. The beach is an excellent spot for picnics and excursions. The lighthouse that was built by the British at

Muttom is almost 100 years old and is visible at a distance of 25 km from the shore.



Muttom Beach is famous for its beautiful landscaping and high rocks dipping into the sea at the beach-side. The sun set view point at Muttom is one of the most panoramic views in the district. Muttom Beach is not very safe because of the slippery rocks, strong

currents and thundering waves and the government has fenced off the most dangerous section of the rocks.

The district administration constructed small open huts at the rock tops for tourists to sit and leisurely watch the massive sea waves whilst protected from the sun and rain. Hundreds of tourists visit at the weekends and benches have been constructed in a circle for the elders to chit-chat, relax and enjoy the sun set.



◆ India is the seventh largest country in the world, at 1.27 million square miles.

◆ India is the largest democracy in the world.

◆ The Kumbh Mela (or Grand Pitcher Festival) is a huge Hindu religious festival which takes place in India every 12 years. In 2001, 60 million people attended, breaking the record for the world's biggest gathering. The mass of people was photographed from space by a satellite.



A Picture taken during Kumbh Mela Festival



◆ Many Indians find toilet paper repellent and consider it cleaner to splash water with the left hand in the appropriate direction. Consequently, the left hand is considered unclean and is never used for eating.

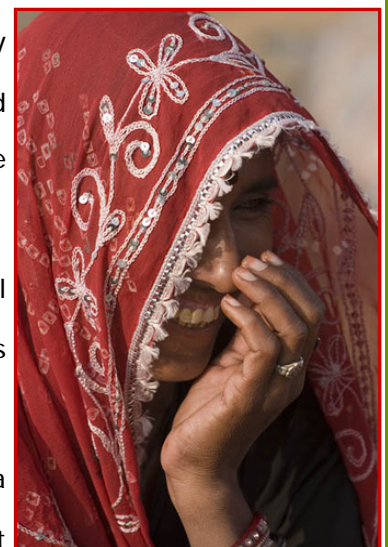
◆ India has one of the world's highest rates of abortion.

◆ More than a million Indians are millionaires, yet most Indians live on less than two dollars a day. An estimated 35% of India's population live below the poverty line.

◆ Cows can be found freely wandering the streets of India's cities, they are considered sacred and will often wear a *tilak*, a Hindu symbol of good fortune. Cows are considered one of humankind's seven mothers because she offers milk as does one's natural mother.

◆ Dancing is one of India's most highly developed arts and is an integral part of worship in the inner shrines of every temple. It is notable for its expressive hand movements.

◆ Many Indian wives will never say their husband's name aloud, as it is a sign of disrespect. When addressing him, the wife will use several indirect references, such as "ji" or "look here" or "hello" or even refer to him as the father of her child.





Stay connected with us in Facebook via our GROUP named "**Projects Abroad India - The Official Group**" and enjoy the latest news, updates and interesting pictures from India ..!

Here comes the Projects Abroad's Blog website - "**My Trip Blog**", where you are invited to post blog. Also read the blogs to get the recent updates from this colourful Country - India!!!



Read the Country Newsletters from India as well as from variety of Destinations and get to have a clear idea about volunteering in Projects Abroad. For the Newsletters, you can visit our website - "**Projects Abroad Official Website**" @ www.projects-abroad.net

If you have any queries/feedbacks/comments regarding the Newsletter / Facebook / My Trip Blog, contact Nadia at india-socialmanager@projects-abroad.org / india@projectsabroadnewsletter.org