



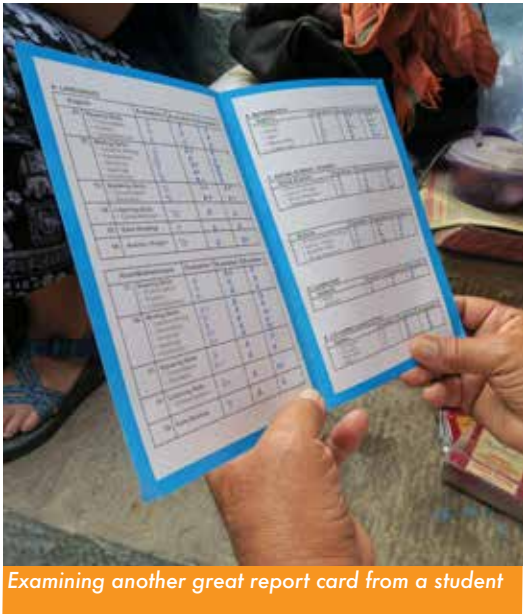
Spring 2019 Updates on the Work

This past February five members of The India Group's board and three TIG supporters made the annual TIG trip to India to meet with our families, the children's schools, and the medical providers who serve our families. Five of the fathers in our TIG families joined the group throughout the trip serving as paid translators, tuk-tuk drivers and guides.

The trip was fruitful but proved challenging due to an unexpected political upheaval and a recurring religious event, both with resultant logistical issues. The biggest terrorist attack in India since the Mumbai 26/11 attack

happened in the Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir on February 14, 2019 which was the same day our travelers began to arrive. The group witnessed protests throughout the trip including the burning of the Pakistani PM in effigy in the streets of two cities. The trip dates also overlapped with Kumbh Mela, a month and a half long festival which draws an additional 120 million pilgrims from across the world to India.

The tension between India and Pakistan over the Pulwama attack and India's retaliatory air-strikes in Balakot, roiled the two nuclear-capable nations to such a degree that Pakistan closed its airspace to all travel, forcing the cancellation or rescheduling of many international flights out of India.



Examining another great report card from a student

The modest hotel in Delhi that TIG uses closed due to an electrical fire the night before the group arrived. And the timing of the trip coincided with school closures in Khajuraho for the Hindu holiday of Ravidas Jayanti. Nonetheless, the group managed work-arounds to provide information and updates that inform TIG decisions.

EDUCATION

On our annual visits, the group talks to teachers, tutors, parents and students to get a progress report of how well the children are doing in school and we pay school tuition. End of year student testing occurred shortly after the group left so we will also be reviewing those results to see if any additional support is needed.

KHAJURAHO: While the schools were closed, parents and one school administrator who met with the TIG contingent reported that the students there were doing well. The group also met with the founder and principal of a new school



Baba & sons, Hemant & Krishna, in Khajuraho



Some of Laxmi's family

which had been suggested by a local, Tarik, who has a long-standing relationship with TIG.

NOWGONG: We support Bablu and Chanda's family whose three children attend a Catholic school, so the group met with the head priest and nun. The two daughters, Sakshi and Jyoti, seem to be thriving, but the family's young son, Deepak, is having difficulty in school which has been a consistent issue for a few years.



Jyoti with her mom, Chanda, in Nowgong

VARANASI & DELHI: The group met with principals and teachers, all of



Classroom of students at Guru Angad Public School in Delhi

the children seem to be doing well. TIG encourages our families to enroll their children in preschool as soon as they're eligible and so we enrolled a 4-year-old from one of the Delhi families while visiting.

HEALTH & MEDICAL CARE

While all seems to be going well with our education efforts, there have been some difficult and expensive health issues in our families since our last report. The father of Jagjeet, TIG's first student to graduate from school, passed away unexpectedly this winter. In Nowgong, Bablu had to have surgery and his son may need surgery for kidney stones. In Varanasi, Govinda's father needed to be taken to Delhi to meet with our medical consultant there, Dr Shelley Batra. He has a severe kidney issue that will need medical intervention. And there were two complicated births in Delhi. Baby gave birth to a much-anticipated daughter but it was followed by a severe appendicitis attack requiring surgery and Kapoori gave birth but needed a C-section. Dr. Batra presided over both births.



Kapoori's new baby in Delhi

The one-year-old nephew of one of our Khajuraho families passed away from a severe case of tuberculosis that went undiagnosed and untreated for too long.

Though he is not in one of our primary families, TIG members voluntarily helped with medical expenses and ensured that all our families were tested for TB by Dr. Batra's Operation ASHA. All tested negative, but it was a stark reminder of how vulnerable our families are and the importance of early medical intervention.

Dr. Khare, the physician who has a tiny clinic in Khajuraho and provides medical care for our family's less serious issues, had a stroke and though he is back at work, his health situation is a cautionary note about how quickly we can see the fragile safety net we have cobbled together for our families disappear.



Meeting with Dr. Shelley Batra in Delhi

GOVERNMENT PROGRAM: Given the ever-present medical needs of our growing families and the increasing impact medical care has on the TIG budget, TIG convened a task force to explore a more sustainable way of providing medical care using India's newly revamped free medical care system for impoverished families. India has always had such a program in place, but it was not well managed or used. The revamped program, called PJAY, was introduced in 2018 and is growing its network of public and private hospitals and wellness centers throughout the country. Getting our families signed up will require navigating a complex bureaucracy and overcoming family distrust of government services, so TIG decided to identify and pay a TIG facilitator in each of our three service communities to assist our nuclear families and their extended families through the process of getting government identification cards and participating in the 2021 country census, two prerequisites for the PJAY card that qualifies them for free medical care. We're hoping that acquiring ID cards and census recognition will also make other government provided services for our families such as job training.

HOSPITALS: The group spent a good deal of time speaking with administrators at two hospitals, the Jivodaya Hospital in Delhi and the Christian Hospital in Chhatarpur. Both facilities have ongoing capital improvement plans in place and while striving to provide quality, 21st-century medical care to low-income and impoverished Indians. TIG is working to increase its involvement with both hospitals to better serve our families.

SPOTLIGHT

Jivodaya Hospital

The India Group has enjoyed a long relationship with Jivodaya Hospital in Delhi acting together to serve the health and medical care needs of our families in Delhi. We are happy to report that the hospital's long-range planning and capital campaign has translated into beautiful improvements and high-quality, modern services.

