

Kerala Open Team

LOCATION: KERALA, INDIA

PROJECT DATES: DECEMBER 4 - 16, 2014

PARTICIPATION FEE: \$1200

OPTIONAL EXCURSION DATES: DECEMBER 16 - 18, 2014

OPTIONAL EXCURSION FEE: \$300

Flights are not included in the participation fee



Information Packet

MARANATHA IN INDIA

Maranatha has been working in India to build churches and schools for the Seventh-day Adventist Church since 1998. So far, more than 1,600 projects have been completed in the country.

India has a desperate need for schools, as many children and young people have no access to education. Maranatha has been working steadily on constructing large Christian campuses in rural parts of India. Volunteers have built both One-Day School campuses and Education and Evangelism Centers, which consist of six to ten classrooms and a large multi-purpose room. These structures provide Christian education to countless students each year. And through the children, many families have come to know of Christ's love.

Yet even after years of Maranatha working in India, there continues to be an immense need for churches and schools.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Seventh-day Adventist Higher Secondary School in Nedumkandam, a town in the state of Kerala, was established in 1972 as a kindergarten. In 2001, there were 240 students enrolled. Currently it has 557 students in kindergarten through tenth grade. This school reaches students from all religious backgrounds, including Muslims, Hindus, and other Christian denominations. The boarding students are active participants of church activities, such as Sabbath school and children's ministry programs. Many of the boarding students come from the lower classes of India's caste system. The local government supports these students, but they are looked down upon by most of society.

The school has many families interested in sending their children the Adventist school, but the facility is limited and has been unable to expand. This past year they had to turn away 90 students because they lacked classroom space.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Thursday, December 4

Early morning arrivals in Kochi (COK) on Emirates or Etihad Airways. Group transfer to Thekaddy hotel and orientation.

Friday, December 5

Work day

Saturday, December 6

Worship with local congregation

Sunday, December 7 –

Friday, December 12

Work days

Saturday, December 13

Worship with local congregation

Sunday, December 14

Work day and clean up

Monday, December 15

Periyar National Park

Tuesday, December 16

Afternoon departures from Kochi

OPTIONAL EXCURSION

Tuesday, December 16

Departure for Delhi

Wednesday, December 17

Drive to Agra – Taj Mahal

Thursday, December 18

Sunrise tour of Taj Mahal. Return to Delhi for night departures

Maranatha volunteers will help to provide a solution by building additional classroom facilities. When completed, the 12 One-Day School classrooms and office building will provide learning space for more than 450 students.

In addition to the construction, volunteers will also organize outreach activities in the communities surrounding the school. Planned activities include holding a week of prayer for the school children and conducting a children's ministry program.

Accommodations

Volunteers will stay at the Spice Grove Hotel in Thekaddy, India. This beautiful hotel is located about an hour from the school site in Nedumkandam, and it overlooks the spice plantations of Periyar National Park. The rooms are very comfortable and have hot water and private bathrooms. WiFi is available in the rooms for a daily fee. There is also a swimming pool and fitness center. All linens are provided; however, washcloths are not often included, so please plan on bringing your own to use during the project.

Space is limited to 22 rooms at the hotel. If we are able to have 2 people per room, we can accommodate 44 participants.

For more information and photos visit: <http://www.spicegrove.in>



Excursions

During the project, volunteers will visit Periyar National Park. After the project, volunteers are welcome to take an extended tour of Agra with Maranatha. This optional excursion has an additional tour fee as well as an in-country flight. Information regarding flights for this excursion is included later in this packet.

Periyar National Park | This national park is located in the middle of the Cardamom Hills, a mountainous area an hour from Nedumkandam. There are 35 species of mammals in the park, and it is an important tiger and elephant reserve for the area. In 2008, there were 24 Bengal tigers reported in the park. Other mammals include the gaur, Indian giant squirrel, sloth bear, Nilgiri langur, Nilgiri tahr, and the stripe-necked mongoose. There is also a wide array of birds and reptiles throughout the park. The park is also known for a variety in plants, including eucalyptus trees and orchids.

Optional Excursion: Agra | Continue on with the group excursion to Agra, located outside of Delhi. Here, volunteers will visit the Taj Mahal, a stunning marble mausoleum considered one of the world's architectural masterpieces. Mughal emperor Shah Jahan built the Taj Mahal as a memorial to his wife. An estimated three million people visit the beautiful building each year.

Expenses

The participation fee of \$1,200 covers housing for 12 nights, three vegetarian meals a day, ground transportation to and from the airport and project site, a local excursion, secondary accident insurance, a Maranatha t-shirt, and luggage tags. Flights, passport fees and visas, vaccines, and optional excursions are not included in your participation fee.

Maranatha must receive all funds and forms by November 10, 2014, due to application processing time. Please wait for confirmation of acceptance on the project before purchasing your airfare.

If you are fundraising or receiving donations, please have them sent directly to you or work with your local church treasurer to collect funds and issue tax-deductible receipts, since it is difficult for Maranatha to track individual small checks. If your church will not work with you, please wait until you have collected the full amount before submitting your participation fee to Maranatha.

Estimate of Additional Costs

- **Flight to Kochi** \$1,200 – 1,800
- **Passport** \$130 or \$110 for renewal
- **Visa (6-month visa, non rush)**
 - **U.S. citizens:** \$138
 - **Canadian citizens:** \$218

Leadership

Bruce Fjarli | Bruce and his wife Jacki reside in Oregon, where they work at the Fjarli family business. However, they regularly travel the world, and India is among their favorites. Ever since the Fjarli's first visit to India many years ago, they have sponsored multiple projects and volunteered many times with Maranatha in India. Bruce has visited India more than 25 times, and he has extensive experience with construction and development. Bruce will be overseeing the entire project as project coordinator.

Darko Borovnica | Darko has volunteered many times in India and has also traveled to Zimbabwe and Curacao with Maranatha. His love of children makes him an automatic draw for the local kids, and he always has something to make them smile. Darko, who is from Fair Oaks, California, will be leading the construction aspect of the project.

Vinish Wilson | Vinish has been working with Maranatha in India since 2001. His sunny personality, organizational skills, and commitment to the mission of Maranatha has endeared him to many volunteers. Vinish will assist with in-country details and make sure everything flows smoothly behind-the-scenes. Vinish and his wife Rachel have two young children.



ABOUT INDIA

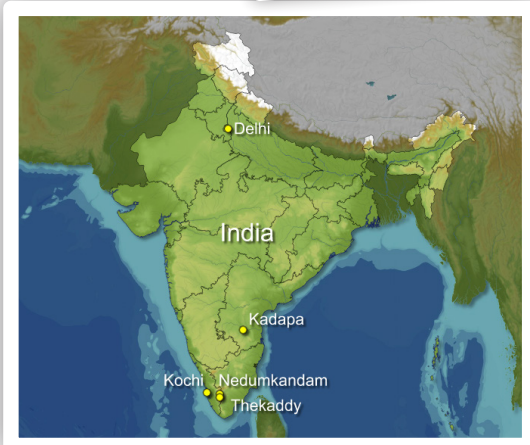
The diversity of India's culture and its rich history has made this country an intriguing place of contrasts. The beggar on the street wears a cheerfully vibrant sari. Hunger is widespread, but the air is thick with simmering spices. The country is crippled by illiteracy, but some of the world's brightest thinkers have emerged from India's cities and countryside. Blending modernity and antiquity, India is pushing forward to make social and economic progress while reconciling the future with its past. Yet these juxtaposed details are what make India a captivating country to visit and a fascinating place to work with Maranatha.

In its early history, India was the center of fiscal and cultural wealth as art and literature flourished and the trade of spices, ivory, and silk abounded. Hinduism became the dominant belief system, although Islam also wove its way into the region over the years. India's prosperity made it a desirable target, and the British began to colonize the region in the 1600s. Efforts to liberate India started 200 years later, but it wasn't until Mohandas Gandhi introduced a nonviolent approach did the Indians achieve independence from the British in 1947.

Today, India is the second most populous nation in the world with over 1.2 billion people. The impact of this huge population is rampant poverty, which has caused illiteracy, inadequate access to drinking water, and widespread illness. Potentially contributing to the overall poverty is a cultural remnant from India's past: the caste system.

Although discouraged by the government, this system of social stratification still dominates many rural communities. The caste system assigns class to individuals and offers no escape from this imposed category. For those subjugated to the lowest level of "untouchables," life is a constant flood of prejudice, discrimination, and abuse.

India remains a country of diversity and beauty. The architecture of the Taj Mahal, the dances and music of Bollywood, the colorful saris and festival of colors, and the spicy curries—India remains a country rich in culture and full of life.



FACTS & FIGURES

Capital: New Delhi

Population: 1.24 billion

Language: Hindi 41%, Bengali 8.1%, Telugu 7.2% and various other languages and dialects

Climate: Humid and monsoon in southern India. Temperate in the north.

Religion: Hindu 80.5%, Muslim 13.4%, Christian 2.3%, Sikh 1.9%

Currency: Indian Rupee (approximately 60 Rupees to \$1 USD)

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Volunteers will purchase their own plane tickets to the Cochin International Airport in Kochi, India, where Maranatha representatives will meet you (see below). If you will be transferring to a domestic airline for your connection from Delhi, Chennai, or Bangalore to Kochi, we recommend trying to book all the way to Kochi on one itinerary to take advantage of the international baggage allowances.

Please plan on arriving on Emirates or Etihad Airlines early Thursday morning around 3:00 a.m. Maranatha representatives will meet you and take you to a local hotel for breakfast before driving to the project hotel in Thekaddy, which is approximately three and a half hours from the airport.

Some volunteers may choose to arrive on Wednesday evening. If you choose to do so, please plan on booking a hotel at the Flora Airport Hotel in Kochi. There is a shuttle from the hotel, and Maranatha representatives will meet you in the morning for breakfast.

To see the hotel and book a room visit:

<http://www.florahotelsindia.com/kerala/kochi/kochi-flora-airport-hotel.aspx>

Flights

Please wait for confirmation from Maranatha before purchasing your airfare to ensure there is still space on the project.

Arrival | Please plan to arrive in Kochi (airport code COK) in the early morning of Thursday, December 4 or in the evening of Wednesday, December 3, if you choose to arrive early and book a hotel room (see above).

Departure | Project Only: Travel home from Kochi (COK) in the afternoon of Tuesday, December 16.

Optional Excursion-Agra:

Please book the following flights:

- Kochi (COK) to Delhi (DEL), Air India 478
Tuesday, December 16, 5:45 p.m.
- Travel home from Delhi (DEL)
Thursday, December 18, after 11 p.m.

Resources

Azumano Travel: 800-454-4099 or by email with Erle at edpenha@azumano.com

Butler Travel: 503-879-5005 or by email with Nathanael at nathan@butlertravel.com or with Ellen at ellen@butlertravel.com.

Kayak: www.kayak.com

When contacting the Azumano or Butler travel agencies, mention Maranatha for the best fares.

Entry Requirements

All passports must be valid for at least six months from the dates of intended travel (May 19, 2015). If you do not have a passport, U.S. citizens can apply at any U.S. post office or online at <http://travel.state.gov>. Canadian citizens can apply online at www.passport.gc.ca. It can take up to two months to complete the entire process, so plan accordingly to give yourself enough time to receive your passport.

In addition to a passport, travelers must also have a valid visa for the country of India before traveling. The Indian government requires that you apply with the consulate or embassy in your regional jurisdiction. You can either apply in person or by using an online visa service. You will only need a six-month visa; however, if you plan to visit India again in the future, you may consider applying for the five or ten year visa. A document explaining the application process, complete visa requirements, and tips for filling everything out will be sent to you with your confirmation.

Citizens of other countries, please consult the Indian embassy or consulate in your home country for entrance requirements.

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS & PRECAUTIONS

Maranatha requires that every volunteer have a current tetanus vaccine (within the last 10 years). The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also recommend vaccines for hepatitis A, typhoid, and an antimalarial medication other than Choloroquine.

Because Maranatha is not a medical organization, we recommend that you schedule a consultation with a travel clinic doctor to discuss the potential health risks in traveling to India and the ways to minimize them.

HOW TO REGISTER

To register, please complete the online registration and pay the full participation fee or an initial deposit of at least half the total participation fee. You can make this payment online by credit card, over the phone, or with a check made out to Maranatha Volunteers International and sent to the address below. If for any reason you need to cancel your participation, Maranatha will do our best to refund your deposit up until one month before travel. After that point, \$150 is non-refundable, and the remainder will depend on the reservations and the project arrangements already made.

Register online at Maranatha.org or over the phone.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: (916) 774-7700

Fax: (916) 774-7701

Email: volunteer@maranatha.org

Website: www.maranatha.org

Mailing Address:

Maranatha Volunteers International
990 Reserve Drive
Suite 100
Roseville, CA 95678

Canadian Payments Only:

Maranatha Volunteers
International Association
c/o V06494C
PO Box 6494, Station Terminal
Vancouver, BC V6B 6R3

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Share the spirit of service with Maranatha-themed apparel and accessories.

NIKE CLASSIC POLO \$45



This classic golf polo has stitch-trimmed shoulder panels, flat knit collar, three-button placket and open hem sleeves—with Dri-FIT fabric technology to keep you dry on those hot days.

HARD HAT \$11



This MSA V-Gard hard hat, with Staz-On suspension, ensures excellent shock absorption on the job site.

MARANATHA.ORG



TO ORDER, CALL (916) 774-7700

All prices are excluding sales tax and shipping.

CAP \$12



All cotton and easy to pack, this cap is sure to keep the sun off your face on a mission project and at home.

WATER BOTTLE \$15



The autospout water bottle by Contigo features a one-touch-button spout for convenient one-handed drinking. It also has a spout shield to protect the spout from debris and dirt when not in use—perfect for the project site.