



Echo of Himalaya

Monthly Bulletin of Himalayan Free Church of India

JULY, 2021 | VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2

Verse to be remembers!

“Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”
Isaiah 43:18-19

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“The spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions. The nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we become.”
— Henry Martyn

Finnish Mission History: Reflecting on the past, moving into the future

In October 1888, American-Swedish preacher Frederick Franson arrived in Helsinki, the capital of Finland. During his staying, he conducted a three-week Bible study program in Helsinki. During the time of training, Reverend Frederick and his colleagues were praying that the Lord gave a vision of sending them to Tibet. They formed an organization called SAM (Scandinavian Alliance Mission). The Scandinavian Alliance Mission (SAM) started the Himalayan Mission in 1892. The activity of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission in the Himalayas was started by North American based Scandinavians. J.F. Frederickson, his sister Anna and 10 Canadian missionaries travelled from Vancouver to Kolkata and Darjeeling in 1892 only to find out that they couldn't enter Tibet as had been their intention. They applied a permission to start the work in India instead, and acquired the first mission house in the Ghoom bazaar as main mission station. The closest stations to Tibet were founded in the Sikkimese villages of Lachen and Lachung near the southern frontier of Tibet, and there were hopes that the activities could eventually be extended to Tibet as well. The SAM, like all the other missions in the area was acting in colonial circumstances under the British authority. There were also hopes that the Mission could enter Tibet from Bhutan, and another station was founded in Baxa-Duar in the Bhutanese frontier for this reason. Unfortunately, the closing of Tibet was a result of the complicated political situation in Central Asia. Earlier till 17th century, many missionaries had been travelling and staying in Tibet. However, by the 19th century the borders were closed and carefully guarded by the Tibetan and Chinese authorities. Even the Tibetans living in the Lachen Valley were not allowed to enter further to Tibet.

Then in India, contacts between the SAM workers and the British officials were more or less regular. All permits for purchasing land, founding new stations or running schools were to be applied from the local –in other words, colonial –administration. For Sikkim, a visa with a promise not to enter Tibet was needed for missionaries.

The first Finnish missionary, Ms. Sigrid Gahmberg, came to India in 1895 and went to place called Chunabhatti for mission work. In August 1896, another Finnish missionary Ms. Klara Hertz arrived in Darjeeling (Ghoom). Since then, a school has been opened since 1897, deeming it necessary to educate the local people (especially children) there.

In December 1898, four new missionaries (Mr. Carlo Waismaa and his wife Hanna Waismaa, Ms. Massinen, and Hilja Heiskanen) came to India. While on a missionary mission at Ghoom, Sigrid suffered from malaria and died in 1900. She was buried near the mission office at Ghoom. In 1906, Ms. Klaara Hertz arrived in Lachen (Sikkim) from Finland and began mission work there. Meanwhile in 1908, Massinen became ill and died while she was intending to return Finland. In 1909, Klaara and Elin Kronqvist returned to Lachen from Ghoom. **(to be contd...)**

~Noel Giri, Sukhia Pokhri



Graveyard of three Finnish Missionaries at Ghoom

Indian Christian Day (Yeshu Bhakti Divas):

July 3, has been chosen by Indian Christians as the first Indian Christian Day or Yeshu Bhakti Divas in India. The event, which celebrates the life and ministry of Saint Thomas the Apostle, is designed to stress that Christianity is not a foreign religion in India. The initiative aims to underline, recognize and celebrate the influence and contribution of the Christian faith to India.

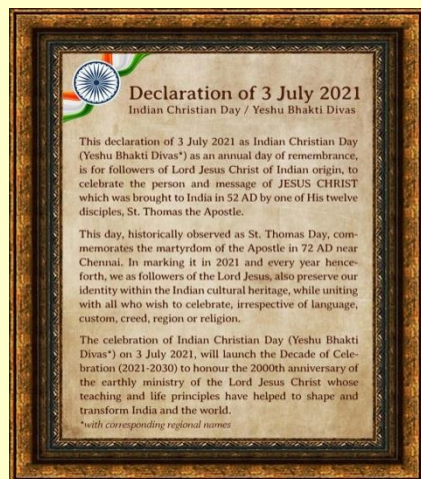
An Eye Opener – I

Pray for Indian Believers!

India has long been known as a violent country for followers of Jesus. That's why it's ranked in the top 10 of the World Watch List for the last two years. While in 2019, 825 incidents of Christians facing persecution for their faith, in 2020 the total number of incidents was 698. In 2019 eight murders were recorded, compared with 18 in 2020. In 2019, 1,676 Christians were reported as being physically abused, while in 2020 there were 1,893 individuals who reported beatings.

And in 2019, there were 51 reports of homes or properties that belong to Christians that were damaged, while in 2020 there were 201 such reports.

Courtesy: Open Doors Report.



On July 3, Christians of all denominations in India will celebrate the first Indian Christian Day. According to the founders of the event, July 3 was chosen because it is traditionally observed as Saint Thomas Day, the day celebrating Saint Thomas the Apostle who came to India in 52 AD and brought message of Jesus. It is historically accepted that Saint Thomas was martyred near Chennai, located in India's Tamil Nadu state, in 72 AD. According to the 2011 Indian census, out of a population of 1.3 billion, the population of Hindu religion is 966 million (80%). Muslims are 172 million (14%), while Christians are a total of 29 million (2.3%).

~NEWS REPORT ON IFFEC~

IFFEC Meeting:



On June 14th, 2021, the board members of IFFEC (International Federation of Evangelical Free Churches) gathered via conference call for the meeting. The General Secretary of HFCI (Pastor Anand Rai) attended the said meeting representing HFCI. During the proceeding,

General Secretary of HFCI tabled the report of HFCI mentioning current situation of the Himalayan Churches during Covid-19 pandemic and ongoing ministries of HFCI. IFFEC is a growing network of national churches (founded in 1948, Bern Switzerland), united in Christ to glorify God by serving member federations as they equip and develop healthy churches. Thirty-one national member federations make up IFFEC. There is also 1 associate member and 1 regional association (with 7 national churches). IFFEC is represented in 34 different countries and brings together a worldwide community of about 700,000 people.

~Prayer Desk~

Church Construction Projects:



Amidst of this Covid-19 pandemic, new Church building of Chungthang HFCI is under construction. Kindly uphold in your prayer for adequate finance and other needs of ongoing Church Construction Project of said Church.

(Photo Ref. – ongoing construction of Church building)

Additionally, please do pray for ongoing Church Construction Projects of HFCI as follows:

1. Margret's Hope HFCI Church Building Project.
2. Gelongtaar, Lebong Valley HFCI Church Building Project.
3. Lebong HFCI Church building Project.
4. SimKharka, Sikkim HFCI Church Building Project.
5. Yangyang, Sikkim HFCI Church Building Project.
6. Suntalabari, Buxaduars HFCI Church Building Project.
7. Ranka, Sikkim HFCI Church Building Project.

Few More Prayer Points:

1. Please do uphold in Prayer for ongoing HFCI ministry in rest part of India viz. Assam, Nepal, Malda (West Bengal).
2. Pray for HFCI's ongoing mission works over the Himalaya.
3. Pray for all upcoming scheduled events of HFCI viz. Mission and Evangelism, Fellowships/Seminars, Shepherd Bible Seminary etc.
4. Pray for the 1.4 billion people in India, that their heart and mind will be open to serve the living God, and strongholds will come down and true worship of a living God for who He is will rise up from every corner of India.

“You will make your prayer to him, and he will hear you, and you will pay your vows.”

Job 22:27

Your Quality Contribution Matters:



Dear Readers!

Kindly send your article/write-up/Biblical Teachings/Testimony/Mission Reports/Church Reports etc in brief (within 300 – 700 words) which may found more relevant to publish in our upcoming circulations.

You may send soft copy (Only Word File) of write-up on given email or WhatsApp.

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