

PARTNER PLAN

An ecumenical appointment with

The **Methodist Church** 

Pat Jamison - Bangladesh October 2014



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Hello Everyone

Well yet another month of various things happening in Bangladesh and throughout CBSDP. Early in the month there was one of the biggest Hindu festivals Durga Puja and then Qurbani Eid one of the largest Muslim festivals.

At this festival animals are sacrificed very

openly. For several days prior to the main Eid day animals are brought from village areas and many from India. Communities are taken over by cows and goats which are then sold

in markets throughout the city. One of the roads I travel to my office was one such area. I just had to see it and so we drove as far as we could before we had we were turned onto a bypass road. Here you will see many of the men who have brought the animals to Dhaka caring for them and even sleeping and eating alongside them.



Many animals are not treated very well in Bangladesh. So I love to see how people take care of the cows and goats at this special time.

On Sunday before the main Eid day I along with several other friends went to the Botanical Gardens for a picnic. The photograph on my first page shows the group enjoying lunch. It was lovely although unlike our last visit at Christmas it was a much hotter day. Most of us then walked to Robin's home near to the gardens where we had coffee. As we entered we

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were shown the dog and puppies being cared for in a lovely comfortable bed. Of course the children were excited to see all the puppies and even more so to play with Robin's two cats (although I'm not sure the cats liked it too much).

Although it has been a month of celebrations it has also been a time of tragedy with 21 people killed and 62 injured on the roads around the Eid period. As you will see in this photograph you can understand why this happens. Buses, trains and ferries are laden down with people

trying in whatever way they could to get back to their villages and celebrate the very special festivals and then return to Dhaka about one week later. Transport is much more expensive at Eid holidays. This photo from a local paper I read was focusing on an article about how so many people delay returning to Dhaka as the bus and train fares are so expensive. Many travel on the roof of buses and trains just to get back. They still have to pay although some do risk it by jumping on and off without paying the fares.



Being in a country with people from so many nations means I often get the opportunity to be involved in gatherings and celebrations I wouldn't do if back at home in NI. I have several Canadian friends and this month it was Thanksgiving. It was lovely to be gathered with several other Canadians, Americans, English and Northern Irish friends for this occasion. I enjoyed the lovely food and whole atmosphere of the evening. After dinner everyone shared what they wanted to say thanks for and even the young children contributed which was such a blessing. I am indeed truly grateful to friends who include me in their many celebrations.

CBSDP held their Partners Consultation in the Hope Centre at Savar. There was a lot of planning and preparation several weeks before. I was pleased to be part of it all. There were many items to be made, printed, edited, sorted and prepared and I was in the middle of it all. As I just love organising I was delighted to be involved. A few of us arrived early to prepare the conference room, sort areas the Project Managers would be displaying items from their project areas and ensuring all the banners and posters were in place. The delegates arrived from around lunchtime and it was lovely to share lunch with Steve Pearce (Methodist Church GB), Sandy Sneddon (Church of Scotland) and Fran Mate (Us UK) on that day and all part of the Bangladesh Group from UK.

The consultation was chaired by Bishop Paul Sarker and Bishop Sunil Mankhin, Michael Roy Director of CBSDP, various church partners from many areas of the world, several from CBSDP Executive Committee, two Deans, many staff from central office, several project managers and Mission Partners all attended the consultation. It was also great to

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have several project staff showing and selling items produced in their areas and displaying plants, and food made and grown by various methods throughout their communities.

Thanks for

- A month of many celebrations
- Safe arrival and departure of all our delegates at the Partners Consultation especially with a hartal called on Thursday
- For the beautiful weather with no humidity and a lot cooler at night
- Being allowed to be involved so much in the consultation with the staff of CBSDP
- Grateful to have such loving caring friends and colleagues who care for me in so many ways it makes life so much easier and enjoyable being so far from home and family members.

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Prayers for

- Peaceful times in Bangladesh with many hortals making it very difficult for everyone
- Continuation of the preparation for the launch of our new phase of the development programme throughout CBSDP and for my colleagues and I as all this is



implemented

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Until next month

Pat

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