

A PUBLICATION OF INTERCEDE INTERNATIONAL

EDITOR IN CHIEF:
James S. Eagles

MANAGING EDITOR:
Alan Doerksen

GRAPHIC DESIGN:
Big Footprints Inc.

PHOTO ARCHIVIST & WEB:
Enzo Herrera

PROOFING:
Stella Josiah

PRINTED BY:
Lincoln Graphics

CORRESPONDENTS:

James Eagles
INTERNATIONAL

Alan Doerksen
INTERNATIONAL

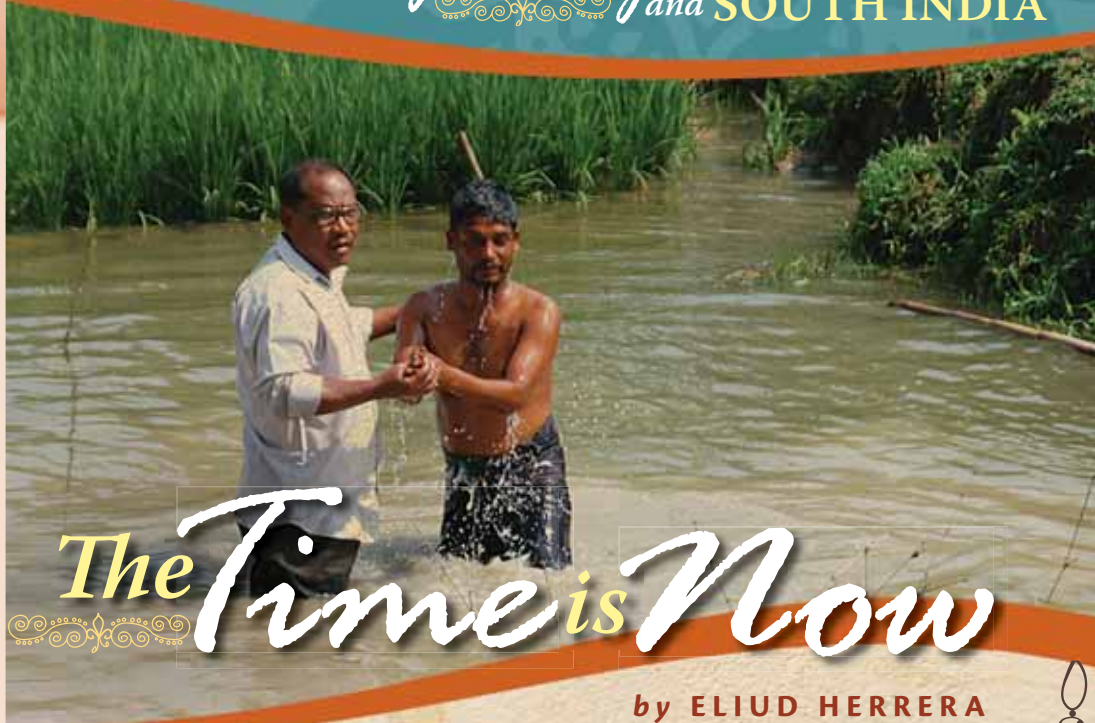
Eliud Herrera
LATIN AMERICA & INTERNATIONAL

K. Esen
MIDDLE EAST

James Okot
AFRICA

Slavik Radchuk & Yanis Smits
RUSSIA, CIS

Freddie & Dorothy Sun
CHINA



The Time is Now

by ELIUD HERRERA

VISIT OUR WEB SITE
www.IntercedeNow.ca

EMAIL US AT
friends@IntercedeNow.ca

MISSION GATEWAY (ISSN 1718-889X) is published and printed quarterly in Canada and sent free of charge to Intercede International partners. Additional copies of this magazine are available on request.

POSTMASTER:
PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40051411

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE
CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:

CIRCULATION DEPT
INTERCEDE INTERNATIONAL
201 STANTON STREET
FORT ERIE ON L2A 2N8

Email: friends@IntercedeNow.ca

VIDEOS, BOOKS and other resource materials are available for missions education.

SPEAKERS & EVENTS: Intercede staff and overseas leaders from many nations are available to speak in conferences, your church or prayer group.

TERMS OF USE

All content including photos are copyright and all rights reserved by Intercede International or named news agencies. Copying material for personal or church use is permitted. For public or commercial use, please contact Intercede for permission to reproduce any content.

DISCLAIMER

The information reported in this magazine is subject to change without notice and is distributed with the understanding that the contents are intended for general information purposes only. For specific or updated information, readers should contact the Intercede International office.

©2009 Intercede International 2009-2301

Timothy Debnath, founder of the **Indigenous Mission of Bangladesh**, departed to be with the Lord in 2002. In one of his books called *Christ Caught in Crisis Here* he stated: “The time is now to do the work of the Lord before His year ends and the day of the Lord dawns.” Pastor Debnath was greatly disturbed in his heart about the defeated state of the churches in his country, and cried out to the Lord for His divine intervention. He would be glad nowadays to see the ongoing change in the church and how his prayers, vision and mission are becoming a reality spearheaded by his widow, Elizabeth, and Louis Biswas—one of his closest disciples.

Bangladesh is located on the northern coast of the Bay of Bengal and is surrounded by India, with a small border with Myanmar. About 156,000,000 people live in this area of the world with a predominant Islamic influence, a minor Hindu population and one per cent of other religions, among this small percentage figure the Christian evangelicals.

In March 2009, we travelled to Bangladesh to witness first-hand God’s move in this impoverished and suffering country. One of the things that impressed me the most was the large quantities of people everywhere we went. What came to my mind was the verse in the Bible that says: the harvest is plenty but the labourers are few. But I was also touched by the amount of work that someone can attain when filled with the passion and love as the missionaries of IMB are.

The Indigenous Mission of Bangladesh counts so far an army of 22 missionaries distributed through the country—few labourers in comparison with the great multitude in need of salvation. The ministry has identified and is reaching out to 17 people groups: Mandai, Bormon, Santal, Pahan and Khumi, just to name a few. These tribes are mostly from Hindu or Buddhist backgrounds.

These warriors of the faith have to contend with many obstacles and barriers in a mainly predominantly religious society.

ABOVE:
An IMB missionary baptizes a young man in a pond on a rice plantation



ABOVE LEFT:
IMB's Louis Biswas, with a portrait of mission founder Timothy Debnath in the background.

ABOVE RIGHT:
IMB missionaries with Intercede's Richard Krawczyk (back, third from left) and Eliud Herrera (back right).

Persecution is a major challenge—it can come from radicals, or even your own family.

Lack of funds to more effectively carry out the task of evangelism is another big barrier for the missionaries. Pastors and evangelists alike work long hours to support their families—and after their daily hard work, they manage to find time and strength to do the labour of the Master.

Our experience with transportation in the country was one that I will never forget: constant danger along the road was our inseparable companion. Roads are filled with cars, bicycles, motorcycles and Bangladeshi rickshaws (tricycles that carry passengers in a compartment). But the majority of missionaries with the ministry cannot even afford basic necessary transportation to carry out the task of evangelism. One bicycle alone will multiply the work by at least three times, so imagine what they can accomplish with a motorbike or a car. The ministry itself does not have any transportation of its own.

Planting churches among the many tribal groups of the nations is at the heart of the ministry. During our visit to a village, around 30 people took water baptisms in a pond located in a rice plantation. These men and women were publicly making a bold statement of their faith in Christ, in spite of the consequences that this testimony could bring upon them. In a recent re-

port, they informed me that one of the men who got baptized during our visit suffered an attack and ended up in the hospital. His body was badly injured, but his faith remained intact.

Another important element of the ministry is the implementation of self-developing relief projects that will improve the lives of believers in the country. The ministry has identified some sustainable projects: bamboo mat crafting, crop production of bananas, pineapples, mangos and ginger, among others, figure as main sources of income for farmers in the country. So in financing these projects the ministry intends to promote self-sufficiency among the people and in that way provide a better life for believers while continuing in the service of the Lord.

Reaching Out to Children

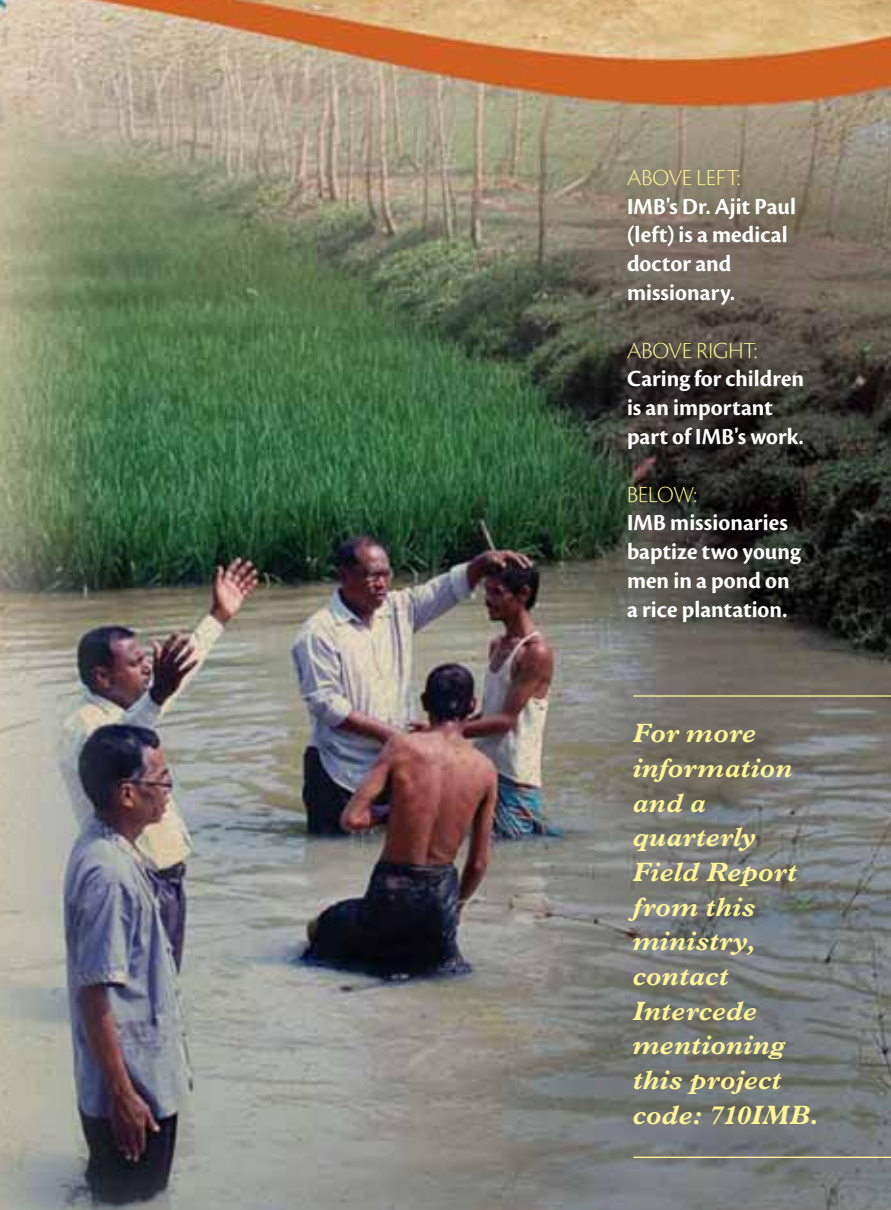
Children's education is another main goal for the ministry. The illiteracy rate in the country is very high. The vision is to build at least one school in one of the villages. This is only the beginning of greater plans for the children of Bangladesh. Two children's shelters are in the vision stage. Many orphans exist in the nation and many of them are not being taken care of. Prayer for funding for this project is a daily task of the leaders and church members.



Medical Relief

Dr. Ajit Paul is a medical doctor and a missionary. In his clinic he treats people for physical sickness, but also shares with them medicine for the soul. In his “free time” Dr. Ajit visits people in different villages of the area and conducts medical clinics with the purpose of gaining the confidence of the inhabitants. Once friendship is established, he preaches the Word of God, and many are healed both physically and spiritually. Dr. Paul does not have a car, or even a motorcycle to visit these villages, so he carries with him the basic instruments of his profession and the little provision of medicine that he can get from his practice and his church offerings, and often must pay for public or private transit to get to places. During our trip he expressed the desire to do more. A motorcycle and a better-equipped mobile clinic would do wonders in Paul’s ministry, but in the meantime he will continue reaching out to hundreds of souls in the Naogaon district of Bangladesh.

The time is now. Year after year we read and hear the news of flooding, violence, strife and other calamities affecting this Asian country. Not everything is bad news. The Lord and His gospel are visiting this country, and the churches have recognized their time of visitation. They need our help to accomplish the task more effectively. Would you join them in this effort?



ABOVE LEFT:
IMB’s Dr. Ajit Paul (left) is a medical doctor and missionary.

ABOVE RIGHT:
Caring for children is an important part of IMB’s work.

BELOW:
IMB missionaries baptize two young men in a pond on a rice plantation.

For more information and a quarterly Field Report from this ministry, contact Intercede mentioning this project code: 710IMB.