



A MESSAGE FROM SHIRLEY HEYWOOD

Prayer letter 58
May 2020

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Dear Friends



How the world has changed since I wrote my last letter! I hope and pray that you are all safe and well and coping with isolation.

I am sorry that I will not be able to come home to UK this month as I had hoped and I don't know when travel will be possible.

With just over 200 cases of confirmed corona virus, none serious, Nepal is a safe place to be so far, but the restrictions to try to keep the virus from spreading bring a heavy economic cost. 2020 was to be Nepal's year of tourism and many people had taken loans and invested all they had expecting a bumper year. Many who relied on day wages have been

without income for weeks. Many thousands have made their way home from India when their day wages employment ended and this is the greatest risk for infection spread.

I was in Kathmandu with five other INF friends for interview at the Labour Department in March, the final stage of visa renewal. The interviews went well and we were hopeful of the new visas being stamped in our passports within a week or two. It was not to be; the corona virus became a pandemic and Nepal as many other countries declared lock down to try and prevent the spread of the virus. The immigration office, as most other government offices has been closed since 24 March.

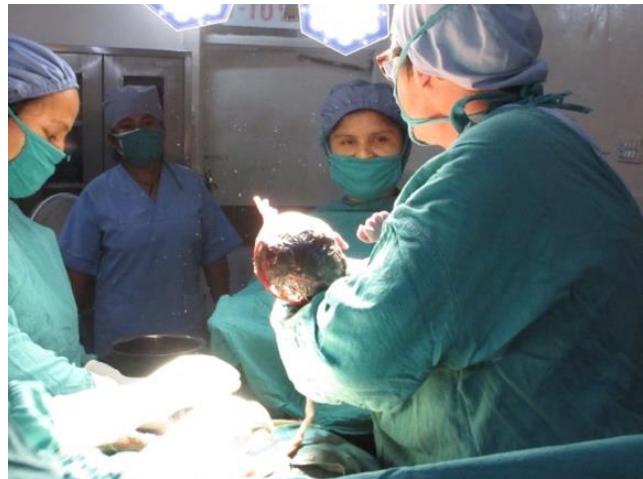
The latest news is that the lockdown has been extended to 18 May and international flights are closed until 31 May. Those of us now without visa are allowed to stay and continue as normal and must present ourselves in Kathmandu within a week of offices opening, whenever that may be.

Nepal has taken strict measures to try and prevent the virus spreading despite the thousands coming home from India. The border with India is now closed, all district

borders are closed, schools, shops and businesses are closed. There are no flights, domestic or international and no public transport. Hospitals, until this week were doing only emergency work. Now slowly outpatient services are recommencing but social distancing is maintained. The only shops open are medicine shops, while food stores open for two hours, 7-9 am three days a week.

I had two weeks in self-isolation after return from Kathmandu which I thoroughly enjoyed, the best rest I have had for a long time and I was happily occupied with books and puzzles and watching films while doing some spring cleaning and enjoying the antics of my chickens. Whatever else is in short supply I have plenty of eggs to enjoy and share!

Since my quarantine period ended, I have been working in the Provincial hospital. The Fistula Centre is closed for the present and all patients safely reached their homes. I have been sharing maternity ward duties. I love working in obstetrics though I have found busy 24-hour duties a challenge.



Thoughts from James Chinnery, a friend here in Nepal

No choice.

Can't get what you want in the shops.

Can't go wherever you'd like.

You can't do just whatever you'd like.

Distressed because you can't plan into the future.

Upset because you can't see your family whenever you like.

Constant pressure to cope, no escape.

Trapped with people you love, but you'd just love a break!

This is not what you chose!

Feeling just a little too close to crazy.

Stuff breaks and you can't get it fixed.

Wondering how everyone else is doing fine, it's just you who seem to be struggling.

Powerless, impotent, weak.

This is just a taste, just the tip of the tongue, of what poverty is like.

You and I still have choices. What will we do with them?

Those choices have been given to you. What does the giver require of you?

Let us pray that we will one day emerge from this time into a gentler, kinder world. May we be more loving, more appreciative of the good things we have, more willing to share and to listen, walking ever more closely with our loving heavenly Father.

INF is looking to a future where income is likely to be reduced for some years to come. If services for the poorest and marginalised are to continue there will need to be savings and almost certainly job losses. Already INF workers who are not needed to maintain the clinical services, are at home taking leave without pay and they face real hardship and fear for the future.

Please pray for our leaders, for wisdom in decision making. Please pray for resources to be found so that the poor may be helped and blessed.

Thank you for your continuing support and encouragement, for the many lovely Easter greetings that you sent.

May God bless you all and watch over you.

With love



Shirley

PS

Change of address: Gilpin Cottage, Starnthwaite Ghyll, Crosthwaite, Kendal LA8 8JN.
My mother has moved and is now also living in Starnthwaite Ghyll.

To find out more about INF and for all donations contact; www.inf.org.uk; **International Nepal Fellowship UK, 24 Weoley Park Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6QX; Tel: 0121 472 2425.**

This letter is sent out by Peter and Judith Bradley – shirleyletter1@gmail.com - 9 Harvard Road, Isleworth, TW7 4PA; Tel: 020 8560 1850. Please inform them of any change of address or email.

For security reasons please avoid comment on Nepali politics or Christian witness in any communications to me