

# CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL, BERHAMPUR

## HISTORY

The Hospital began as a clinic for women and children established by an American missionary - Dr. Nina Ottmann in 1900. Persistent requests and encouragement saw the work expand. Land was donated and, in 1907, the “Christian Hospital for Women and Children, Berhampur” started with four beds.

Alongside the Hospital, the training of young Indian girls as nurses also began in 1907. In 1924 the Out-Patients Block was opened and until 1967, there was a steady improvement in the services of the Hospital - its physical structure, equipment, the services offered, educational facilities, etc. It was in 1967 that financial and other support - mainly from overseas - came to an end and since then it has been a struggle to maintain the Hospital with inadequate local resources.



The Hospital is part of the Church of North India's Synodical Board of Health Services, within the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Cuttack. Sadly, this does not mean that funds flow from the Church to the Hospital but good and effective oversight is in place.

## CONTEXT

The Hospital is located in the Ganjam District, which is in the southern part of Odisha, India. 78% of the population live in rural villages. The population is made up of predominantly Dalit or Tribal people who are at the bottom of the social

scale. Illiteracy is particularly high and workers rely on the daily economy (75% agricultural) for their earnings.

A combination of ignorance, illiteracy, cultural difficulties, poverty, poor nutrition, poor habitation, poor sanitation and unhappy social practices, lead to chronic ill health. With less importance given to girls, early marriage and/or early work, the statistics for anaemia in pregnancy are high and, consequently, infant morbidity and mortality and maternal mortality is high.



Although there are Government health units and other private institutions in Ganjam, many of the people depend upon the Christian Hospital, Berhampur for better and compassionate care at an affordable cost, sometimes travelling large distances on foot to get the help they need. Healthcare in India is costly and whilst the Hospital has a table of fees, it does not turn anyone away because they cannot afford to pay. They ask everyone to pay what they can afford.

## STATISTICS

The following statistics are of the patients who have been treated in the Hospital in the last 5 years:

Particulars	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
<b>Out-Patients</b>	<b>52755</b>	<b>55466</b>	<b>57804</b>	<b>58699</b>	<b>70374</b>
<b>In-Patients</b>					
Pediatric	651	567	678	601	612
General	671	601	1015	724	543
Maternity(Deliveries)	4346	4665	4522	4429	4331
<b>Sick new-born babies</b>	<b>3166</b>	<b>4219</b>	<b>4106</b>	<b>4097</b>	<b>3839</b>



## CURRENT NEEDS

The Governments of India and Odisha have enacted new rules to be followed by all hospitals. A hospital complying with the rules is allowed to provide its services. Hospitals with old buildings are struggling to meet the new regulations, such as the National Building Code and Fire Safety measures. The Christian Hospital is unable to comply with the new requirements and so the 'license to function' has not been renewed since it expired in 2017.



The survival of the Hospital is at stake. The solution is to meet the new regulations by rebuilding the old, core buildings of the Hospital so that they conform to all legal requirements. Plans have been laid to construct new hospital buildings which will house all in-patient facilities and the bed strength will be increase from the present 120 beds to 170, along with the addition of some

more specialised services. As there is no space inside the hospital premises, the old building (built in 1907) is to be demolished and new buildings constructed on the site. The Hospital does not have the funds to meet such significant need and is looking to friends and well-wishers for this great cause.

## **SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS**

1. New building with four floors in two blocks. However, the plans have been phased so that the whole project is not held up if all the funds are not secured.
2. Equipment and furniture for the new building and services.
3. Renovation of some old buildings to relocate support services.
4. New staff quarters for accommodation of more staff required for new services.

The entire project is proposed to be completed in four phases and - hopefully - completed within five years.

## **PEOPLE**

The Hospital is led by the Director, Dr. M. K. Nanda. He has given over twenty years of service and sacrificed many lucrative opportunities to further his career, believing that God has called him to use his skill, knowledge and faith for the benefit of the people of the area. He is hugely respected within ecclesiastical and medical settings. He often goes from meetings with the Hospital Management Team to perform surgery or advise on a patient's progress at the bedside. Many in the Ganjam District owe their lives to Dr. Nanda and his staff.



The nurses training college is a very important aspect of the Hospital's work. Students are trained to a high standard and, once trained, are often sought by other institutions. Such training equips and empowers women by giving them professional skills and responsibility. Such empowerment has the knock-on effect of improving standards in their own homes and communities.



## **PARTNERSHIP**

Our partnership with the Diocese of Cuttack had led to a small number of visits by people from the District to the Christian Hospital. It is an impressive organisation built on prayer and the generosity of many. It operates high standards (in Indian terms) and puts the needs of its patients first, at all times. The witness of the Gospel in that part of India will be greatly diminished if the Hospital has to close.

Plymouth & Exeter District *Methodist Women in Britain* have decided to make the Christian Hospital their charity for the next two years. The need is great and we cannot hope to raise the many hundreds of thousands of pounds needed to rebuild much of the hospital but we can play our part. And those who have visited the Hospital, talked with Dr. Nanda and the Bishop of the Diocese of Cuttack, are confident that every penny raised will be used for the benefit of the people of the area in and around Berhampur. Will you join us in this enterprise?

## **CONTRIBUTIONS**

Gifts and funds for the Hospital are now being gathered. Individuals who are taxpayers and willing to Gift Aid their donations should please send them to:

CAF Bank  
Plymouth & Exeter Methodist District  
Sort Code: 40 52 40  
Account Number: 00019090

Please reference the gift as 'Christian Hospital' and ask for a Gift Aid Form from Rebecca Champion ([finance@pemd.org.uk](mailto:finance@pemd.org.uk)).

Other donations can be sent to:

Barclays Bank  
Plymouth & Exeter District Network  
Sort Code: 20 60 88  
Account Number: 00933570

Please reference the gift as 'Christian Hospital' and e-mail Alison Thompson at [thompson-epworth@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:thompson-epworth@tiscali.co.uk).

If paying by cheque, please make it payable to one of the accounts and send it to the District MWiB Treasurer:

Alison Thompson  
18 Velwell Road  
Exeter  
EX4 4LE

