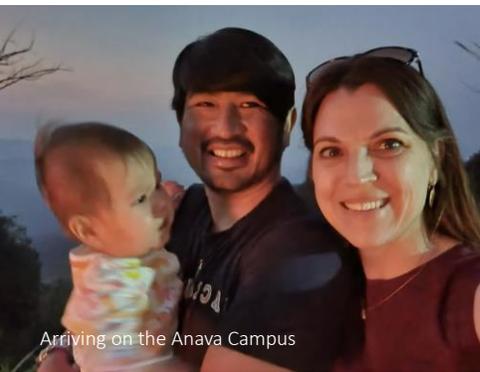




The view from the hospital building

Newsletter May 2022



Arriving on the Anava Campus

Dear Friends,

We're so excited to send our first newsletter from the Anava Campus in Settsü, Nagaland, India! On the 1st March 2022 we packed our six suitcases signed out from Switzerland and relocated to India. The journey itself is quite a challenge- even without a 11 ½ month old child. But by God's grace Elisa did very well, despite a delay in London, a short night in Delhi airport another flight and then the long car ride (11 hours) from Guwahati to Settsü. All the more we were happy, thankful and exhausted when we got here. Our cottage here on the hill surrounded by forest clad hills, the sound of birds and thousands of insects is the perfect place to come to after a very exhausting month packing up und travelling.

Our Container

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, we were so excited to send a container with hospital furniture and our personal things in November 2021 to India. Unfortunately, we still haven't received it. It arrived around the 20th of January in the port of Vizak (Vishakapathnam) in the state of Andhra Pradesh and has been blocked by the customs officers ever since. They unpacked the entire container and hopefully packed it all in again. Every day we call they say it's all done, it will be released tomorrow, but unfortunately tomorrow never comes. Please pray for its release, as we don't know what else to do. We were expecting to have it by the time we arrived so we only had some winter clothing with us and would love to wear something a little cooler in this climate.



Our container at the port

A lot of progress at the hospital site despite many challenges

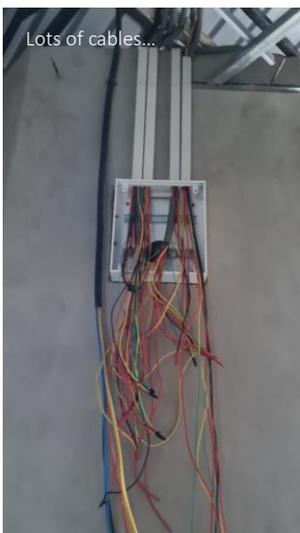
Since we arrived here a lot has been happening at the hospital site. Four teams are literally camping in the hospital while doing their work. The electricians who are living in the X-ray room have come and are putting all the wires in place. The ceiling people are staying in an examination room and are putting up the plasterboards. The tile-workers have occupied another room and have made granite windowsills for the entire hospital and are placing the tiles now in the bathrooms. At the same time, we have the steel-workers on site, living in another examination room. They're fabricating the steel truss and tin roof and gutters for the porch of the hospital. Meanwhile, the construction team has completed the big septic tank and dug a deep trench and put all the big plumbing pipes in place. We have to admire their endurance doing this difficult manual labour.



Tiling the bathrooms



The plumbing



Lots of cables...



The porch



The ceiling work

Just to illustrate the challenges we face while building a hospital in such a remote place I'd like to mention the difficulty of even just getting the material to the site. Sungti went to Guwahati (the 11-hour car journey) to purchase the tiles, granite, stone, toilets and sinks for the hospital. He had to hire two trucks to transport the material to the site. The driver of the first truck called up half way from some place in the jungle to say that his truck has broken down and he needs a replacement. Sungti had to organise another truck and send 8 of our workers in the pick-up to go and reload the material. The replacement truck called up later saying they ran out of fuel and needed fuel. After organising that, the load was finally about to arrive when the gasket of the engine blew and so we had to wait another day for it to be fixed before our truck arrived. The second truck also arrived more or less without complication, but sadly, 5 of the 20 toilets were broken because of the bad roads. Fortunately, the company was willing to replace them so we had to get another truck to bring 5 more some time later. These are the kind of challenges we face.



The hospital status



The ominous truck



The hospital septic tank

The reality of the health care in this region

Sungti's parents have been living in our house during our absence and continued staying with us when we arrived. In the beginning of April we got a scare when Sungti's dad wasn't feeling well. We were all having a cold, so we thought he was getting it too. But then in the evening he wasn't able to find words, was confused and couldn't answer our questions and seemed to be dazed. We got alarmed suspecting a stroke. So Sungti emergently took him to the local hospital because it was raining heavily and there was no where else to go. To our disappointment the care he received was very minimal. They did a brain scan but didn't have anyone to evaluate it immediately and so nothing else was done except that they gave him a sedative and sent him to bed in a poorly equipped room. Sungti was awake all night taking care and decided to make the long drive to Guwahati to take him to a better equipped hospital the next day. We knew that too much time had passed to treat a stroke by then but we realised we had no options. No helicopter could fly in such bad weather. For two days his dad was completely disorientated and couldn't speak. All we could do was pray. And God answered our prayers: Within 5 days he was completely himself again. The results from the hospital in Guwahati showed an old infarct in the brain, but nothing new and other than that no sign of infection or anything else.



Sungti, his Dad and Mother in the hospital in Guwahati

The whole situation showed us how desperately this place needs a well equipped and staffed hospital and how important it is that patients are treated with care or referred if necessary. Above all it showed us that we're safe in God's loving arms and there's nothing too difficult for him.

At the moment....

We've ordered the windows but will have to wait another 45 days for them to arrive.

After quite some struggle in getting the right material, Raju our engineer was able to purchase the chemicals needed to fill the expansion joint between the slabs of block A and B and make the joint waterproof so it won't rain into the labour ward anymore! The second challenge though was the weather. You might have heard of the severe flooding in Assam. Well, a lot of it was caused by the rain here in Nagaland. May is supposed to be the hot dry month, but this year it was like monsoon, so the rain kept us from being able to work on the expansion joint. Yesterday we finally could enjoy some beautiful sunshine and it was sufficient to dry the slab and do the work!

Today the last concrete work is going on where they'll be casting the last slab on the second floor which will house the washing and drying room.



The completion is in sight

By God's grace we've been able to keep up the construction work with all your generous donations so far and we're really grateful for every contribution we've received. Bringing in all the trades as we have at the moment, has brought a financial burden we aren't able to carry at the moment. The pending bills for the windows, flooring, tiling, plumbing, roofing and labour charges have amounted to 50'000 CHF to finish the hospital building excluding the equipment needed to be able to run it. If you feel in any way able to contribute to the finishing, we would be extremely grateful. It's been a long, exciting and tiring journey getting this far and we eagerly await the opening of the hospital hopefully by the end of this year.

Concerning equipment, we have four wonderful ultrasound machines waiting to be shipped in Switzerland. We made some inquiries to get them imported, but unfortunately until now we have just been facing a wall. The authorities have given permission to bring them, but they are demanding 400'000 CHF in duty which is absurd considering that they were donated to us for free. So, if anyone has any idea how this problem can be solved, we would love hear from you!



New on the Anava Board

Before leaving Switzerland, we were prayerfully searching for someone to represent us in our absence. Alex and Lukas Meyer-Landolt graciously agreed on joining the Anava Foundation board. We are very grateful to the Meyer-Landolt family for blessing us with their time.

In our last Anava board meeting, the board decided to give 200 CHF a month from March 2022 as personal support to us as a family. This will go towards paying for the AHV and other expenses while we are away in India without an income until the hospital starts functioning. Other than that, every donation goes directly towards the construction of the hospital.

We hope to be able to send you a report about the completion of the hospital by the end of the year. Do remember us in your prayers and we would love to hear from you too!

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