

# IMF News October 2006



## Hope for the future

A bizarre experience awaited Hector and Malcolm at the Kotilingeshwara Temple on their way to KGF. This temple contains not one image of the phallus of the Hindu god Shiva, but 100,000 of them. In a modest society like India this strikes westerners as strange, but in fact the Shivalingam is worshipped as a fertility god, and many people come to pray for babies.

In India it is a disgrace to be barren, and even the poorest families want children to love, and to look after them in their old age. *"There is something in this that we can learn from,"* said Malcolm, *"as in the west we do not value family enough. However what IMF is doing for future generations is more significant than the Shivalingam temple."*

They made their way to Kolar Gold Fields to be welcomed by administrator Carmel Mary and her team. The project not only helps 100 girls continue at school and college and gives pastoral support to their families, it also trains nurses and tailors, runs a nursery school and computer classes, and provides a phone booth and a medical lab for the community. They both had their blood pressure tested there, and discovered their blood groups, vital things that patients have to pay for in hospitals here.

At KGF Malcolm and Hector met with staff members and discovered that that most of them were themselves from desperately poor backgrounds. Working for IMF provides a lifeline for these families, many of whom would otherwise be destitute.

## Scottish Trustees encouraged by continuing value of Indian partnership

**IMF Trustees Malcolm Duff and Hector Williams have arrived safely back in Scotland after a busy fact finding trip to India.**

They went to see IMF projects in Chennai, Thiruthani and Kolar Gold Fields, to encourage Indian staff and students, and to assess where future investment might be spent.

They met at Chennai airport on Monday 25th September. Hector arrived from visiting relatives in Hyderabad, and Malcolm from a children's home his church supports in Nepal.

At all three centres they met staff and young people who were glad to see them, and who expressed their deep thanks for the ministry of IMF. This work helps

young people from Christian, Hindu and Muslim backgrounds who would have little opportunity otherwise of continuing their education and developing skills.

In Madhavaram, where the main local industry is distilling illicit spirits, one boy has won a bursary to a top Chennai University. In Thiruthani boys have got jobs in teaching and in the police, while at KGF, where the closure of the world's deepest Gold Mines has created a ghost town, the tailoring and nursing schools are equipping girls for jobs in hospitals and factories in the area.

In Bangalore local trustees would like to buy land and build a house so that the office can be moved out of the Arles' flat at United Theological College.

Hector and Malcolm will be reporting back to the Scottish Trust and hope to see new money spent on improving standards and conditions for staff and youngsters alike.



Auxiliary Nursing and Midwifery students, KGF

## IMF seeks new staff to develop work

Many of us are quite used to speaking on the phone with well spoken young Indians advising us about computers, mobile phones and satellite television.

This industry, which has taken jobs away from UK, is also affecting the job market in India, where educated young people would rather work in a call centre than for a charity like IMF.

Dr Nalini Arles, treasurer of IMF India, says, *"We advertised for a director, but all the applicants were Hindus and Muslims. We offered a salary of 12,000 rupees a month, equivalent to a theological lecturer's salary, but no one suitable was interested."*

At present Mr Jacob Sounder Raj, who runs a pharmaceutical company, is

temporary part time director, but we desperately need a permanent appointment. Please pray that the right person will be found.

IMF India is permitted to receive Foreign Currency for its work. This necessitates the use of several book keepers to make sure accurate accounts are sent to the Indian Government.