THE LAST LEG OF THE JOURNEY

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Category: Observations

On Sunday we left the conference centre outside of Dhaka where I had been speaking and headed back into the city. We spent the rest ofÂ Sunday chatting to friends and getting some rest as well as enjoying a hot shower (the conference centre only had cold water). We tried to get a good night's sleep on Sunday before the long haul home. Unfortunately, a blogger in the UK, who will remain anonymous, forgot that we were not in the UK and called my mobile late on Sunday evening his time - four am. ours.Â I'm not the world's greatest sleeper and didn't actually get back to sleep for the rest of the night.

The driver who was due to take us to the airport got stuck in Dhaka's horrendous traffic, so at the last moment, our colleagues had to organise a taxi for us. When we got to the airport, we found a very long queue at the Gulf Air desk, but we were waved straight to the front - which was very nice.

When you are checking in for a flight, it is always unnerving when the desk agent looks quizzically at your ticket and then starts typing furiously, looking back at your ticket, squinting at the screen and finally calling a colleague over to help. Eventually, there were two agents staring at the screen, while they talked to a third on the radio and Sue and I looked on somewhat bemused. Eventually, it turned out that our flight would be delayed and that we would not be able to make our connection in Bahrain. Not only that, but all of the remaining onward flights to London were full and we would need to wait for 24 hours before we could get home.Â Our bags were checked to Bahrain and we were told to pick them up there and that Gulf would put us up in a hotel overnight. Happily, they also gave us an upgrade to business class for the five hour flight to Bahrain!

Arriving in Bahrain we were told that we could get an earlier flight to Heathrow and that we would only have to spend seven or eight hours on the ground and that our bags would be retagged for London without us having to pick them up. Gulf did a great job, giving us vouchers for visas and a hotel room and dinner for the wait. It would have been even better if the hotel had not made us wait an hour in the airport before driving us across the city to the hotel.

We had a nice buffet dinner and then a short sleep before being woken at 11pm Bahrain time (3 am Dhaka time, 8 pm UK time) to be driven to the airport for our 2 am flight. The contrast between business class and economy was all to apparent as we walked to the back of the plane.

We arrived at Heathrow at six in the morning. The last hitch was that our bags had not arrived and that they would be flown on from Bahrain on a later flight. This means that they will arrive at our house sometime around midnight tonight - making it even more difficult to get our bodies used to the multiple time zone changes.