WHAT WE DID IN BANGLADESH

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Category: Observations

Most people in Bangladesh speak the national language, Bengali or Bangla, but as the photograph below demonstrates, the language situation in the country is quite complicated.



This sign was at the entrance to a village in the hills above Bandarban in the east of the country. Most of the lettering is in Bengali script, but if you look closely, the third line from the top is written in an entirely different script. This is the language of one of the hill tribes in the area. The script owes its origins to a religious movement which swept through the country a number of years ago.



Gabriel the Director of TOYMU with our colleague Paul

Today, there is a Bangladeshi NGO, TOYMU, working among the hill tribes, doing literacy work and basic education. The work is funded by Save the Children and the UN. This is a superb example of partnership, with different organisations bringing different contributions to improve the health and well being of the mountain people.

None of the organisations involved could achieve anywhere near as much if they worked on their own as they can working together. It is an impressive movement.

While in Bandarban, we also met with a Christian pastor whose church is involved in a variety of educational and development projects across the area as it seeks to reach out to the different ethnic groups in the hills.

Our trip to Bandarban was not without interest, and you can read about it here.

The last three days of our time in Bangladesh was spent at a retreat centre outside of Dhaka where we were meeting with people from a variety of Christian organisations working with minority groups in the country. I gave daily Bible studies which seemed to be well received and also helped to lead a number of discussion sessions looking at how the groups could work together. All in all, it was a packed, but very encouraging time.