

One Month Later: 5/22/05

It started with phone calls - to Dana, Mohan and Michelle, at the Global Crossroad central office. Call me old-fashioned but, when I have a question, I appreciate having someone there to directly answer it. Traveling to Sri Lanka with my son, Michael, was not something I took lightly. There were plenty of issues and inquiries, all of them addressed politely, professionally and, as it turned out, accurately. Sometimes the 1-800 phone conversations would last thirty minutes or more. If these folks are as good as they sound, I thought, we are in good hands. Hopefully the people on the other end are as competent.

Paul, Michael and Ravi were. These native Sri Lankan coordinators are a remarkable crew. Faced with a daunting and unprecedented task, they made us (the volunteers) feel welcome, safe and useful. I can't say enough good things about their engaging personalities and their energetic work ethic. It quickly reached the point where I never doubted that they would deliver, whether it be a ride, a meal or an encouraging word.

An effort, like Tsunami reconstruction, is only as good as the people involved. Rest assured you will meet good people.....in-country people and out-of-country people who have a unique quality about them. Simply put, they probably care just a little bit more than your typical world citizen. As for Mike and I, it was a pleasure and a privilege to be around them. Strangers from distant places who we will never forget and hope to keep in contact with, now as friends.

My son and I will also never forget how hot it was, how difficult the driving traffic was, how iffy the food was and, for sure, how hard the work was. This is not adventure for those who cannot adjust to demanding conditions. Read carefully the Global Crossroad cautionary advice. It means what it says. Sri Lanka is most definitely a third world country; yet it's one with a first rate heart. The people of this underdeveloped country will long remember December 26th, but they will also vividly remember those that came to their aid.

Global Crossroad will get you there. If your body and brain can handle it, your rejuvenated spirit will bring you back.....a different and probably a better person.

Thank you, Global, for the experience of a lifetime.

Sincerely,


Paul J. Kelly