

TOMMY TU

Reflection

First and foremost, I would like to thank Leenus and Dalit Solidarity for welcoming us with open arms and providing us with an experience that we will cherish for the rest of our lives. Although circumstances were against us, Leenus made it her priority to accommodate for us, making sacrifices not only to her health, but to her family. Without Leenus this trip would not have been possible, and I express my complete gratitude to her. She is a true child of God and it is evident that she has made it her mission in life to serve Him no matter the circumstances. Leenus has dedicated her life to providing help to the marginalized and less fortunate. I truly believe that God has chosen her as a vessel for His kingdom.

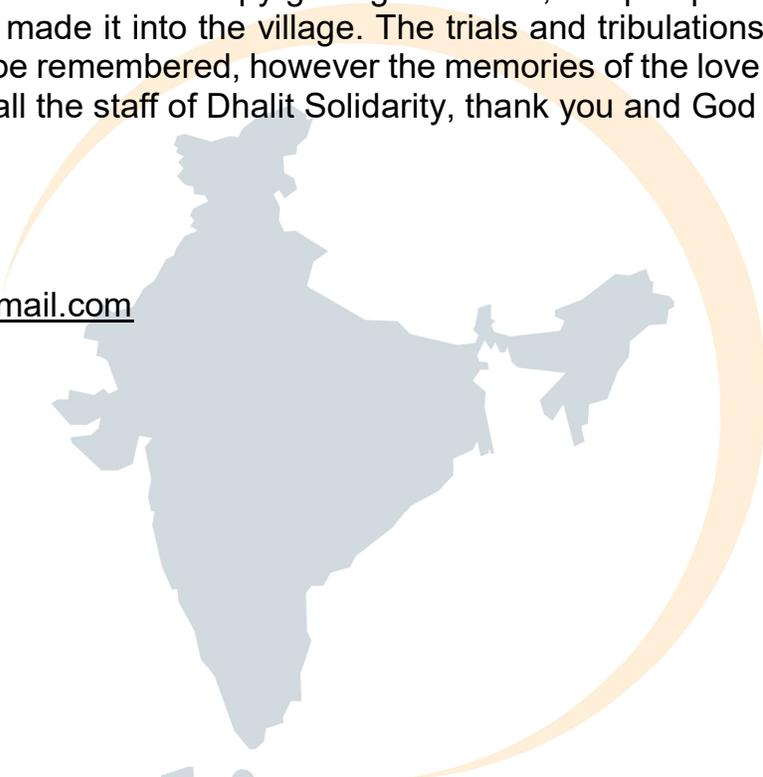
Coming into India expectations were low. As a group of four boys, we weren't completely sold into the environment and culture since it was difficult to adjust to the food and the weather. Not to mention we also lost our luggage and experienced lengthy delays, creating an even more stressful experience. However, the staff accommodated and worked with us to retrieve our luggage and to make our living space comfortable, providing new equipment to ensure a sanitary environment for us.

Once arriving in Chennai, we made our way in the night on a 3-hour drive to St. Mary's Clinic. Exhausted and restless we fell asleep. Upon arriving to St. Mary's Clinic, we were abruptly woken up to a horn and fireworks. Disoriented and confused, we were rushed out the bus. We then realized that the whole clinic had stayed late to host a welcoming ceremony, showering us with gifts, greetings, and dances. This would soon be the case at every school or clinic we would arrive to. It was such a unique experience to have a group of people who hardly know us be so welcoming and loving to their home. Although New Year's disrupted our original plans, Leenus did her best to get us into the medical camps and hospital visits and it was amazing. We learned so much about the Indian healthcare systems and operations, even having firsthand experience in an orthopedic operating room. After the visits to the medical clinics and hospitals we arrived at St. Patrick's Matriculation School where the whole student body welcomed us with dances and traditional marches.

Their faces lit up with excitement and happiness at our arrival. We were then able to teach them and interact with every classroom. Everywhere we went all the students waved and introduced themselves. They were genuinely excited about having us there with them. All the teachers and staff were so nice and did an amazing job teaching the despite limited resources.

Even though the road was bumpy getting into India, our perspectives completely shifted once we made it into the village. The trials and tribulations we have gone through will not be remembered, however the memories of the love and culture will last forever. To all the staff of Dhalit Solidarity, thank you and God bless.

Sincerely,
Tommy Tu
backst4bb3r@gmail.com



Dalit
Solidarity