

It seems I've been on the move for days but we just actually got into some hospital action today. The holdup in Nepal is generally the Medical Council Interview process. Because Richard (the surgeon this trip) have both not worked in Nepal for a few years we had to redo the interview process. I had moved my flights up to be able to go Sunday, which is the only day they give interviews. Richard didn't arrive until Sunday night. Fortunately my interview this time was very informal and chatty and the officials agreed that they could set it up with one of the administrative staff to meet with Richard today and that would be sufficient. So off we went this morning for the formality of meeting the rules and regulations at the Council office, and then tried to head out to Anandban hospital to work there two days before going to Pokhara. And that's when a 'faster route' turned into a logjam as we encountered roadblock after roadblock because of high security for the visit of the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. We eventually reached the hospital about 1:30 and got one case done for the day. It was definitely a 'be flexible' day!

Kathmandu has changed a lot since my last time here in the fall of 2005. New construction is everywhere but the infrastructure can't keep up. Electricity is on for 2 four-hour periods each day. Apparently it cycles on and off frequently enough to keep the refrigerator cold, at least... rivers are dry, hydro power is their mainstay and they had a poor rainy season last year and little snow in the mountains. The whole city is dusty; every leaf has a thick layer of dust on it. I'm surprised the vegetation survives. I saw my first real green today out near Anandban. Water is delivered to the guest house in tanker trucks. Many of the artesian springs Kathmandu has depended on for centuries have dried up.

Since I arrived earlier than Richard and Ling it was especially helpful that a doctor I've worked with in the Philippines is now doing language studies in Kathmandu with plans to work in western Nepal for 4 years. We connected Saturday afternoon and Bhabu's been a tremendous help and great company while I've been learning my way around a section of the city that's new for me.

And now it's time to head back to the guest house to be ready for whatever tomorrow may bring...

Alison