

What God Has Joined Together...



The Wedding Ceremony

We are pleased to announce the marriage of Vision India Pastor Sujit Digal to Manisha Nayak. Tarun befriended Sujit over ten years ago and soon led him to the Lord. Following a call to preach, he attended the Vision India School of Ministry and planted a church in his village of Dogapadar. During the persecution, his home was demolished and he moved to Anandanagar, just 20 kilometers from Manisha's village of Telingia. Tarun was enlisted to assist the families with the arrangements. Please pray that God will mightily use this dedicated young couple for His glory.

...with a Little Help from *Kith and Kin*

In India, the majority of marriages are still *arranged*.* The main difference between Christian marriages and those of other religions in India is that Christians are never forced into a marriage. Bride and groom must agree before the union takes place. Matchmaking is carried out by kith and kin (friends and relatives.) An exciting event is the proposal ceremony held at the bride's family

home. It is a custom that the bridegroom's family present gifts such as saris, blouses, and sayas (skirts) with pockets of sweets. Tradition calls for the groom to pay the Salwanga (entry fee) before entering the bride's home.

Later, a negotiation ceremony includes all kith and kin as well as village elders and pastors. It is a joyous and wonderful occasion for both families.

This is the beauty of our society – that the bride's family shows utmost respect, honor and love for the groom's family by washing their feet with turmeric water. The groom's family presents gifts such as soap, oil, beauty materials, sweets, and materials for clothes for the bride's parents, brothers and sisters. Both families discuss plans and a possible wedding date.

They offer earnest prayers for success of the wedding ceremony.

The engagement is proclaimed door to door throughout the village and in written invitations to kith and kin, leaders and churches. Many uninvited guests also attend the ceremony. A tent is prepared and musicians play festive music. Special blessings for the wedded couple take place after the registration of the marriage.

A grand gathering for the wedding feast follows. Naan, rice and dal are served with rich and spicy accompa-



The Wedding Feast

niments as the women sit on one side of the tent and men on the other. A joyous time is shared by all!



...as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you. Isaiah 62:5b

**Arranged marriages have been the tradition in Indian society for centuries. Even today an overwhelming majority of couples in India - 85% in urban areas and even higher in rural settings - have their marriages planned by their parents and other respected kith and kin. Surprisingly, the divorce rate in India ranks as one of the lowest in the world – only one in 100 marriages end in divorce.*

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"
John 11:25-26

Matchmaker, matchmaker, make me a match...

Did you notice the little girl in the photo of the wedding ceremony on page one? She appears to have a look of awe on her face as she observes this special occasion. Maybe she is thinking about her future marriage.

In keeping with accepted cultural values of Christians in India, Tarun and the staff have established guidelines for the House of Hope children regarding marriage. The children should accomplish their degree, whether theological, nursing, educational, engineering, medical, vocational, or agricultural. After completing their specific studies, securing employment, and attaining the age of 21, they will be eligible. If assistance is needed in finding a suitable mate, the staff will, after prayerful consideration, serve as matchmakers for the children who have met the prerequisites.

Easter in India

Q. How will the staff and children of House of Hope celebrate Easter this month?

A. We will be celebrating Good Friday with fasting and prayer. We plan to observe Easter, the day of Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ who is our Hope of Glory, with an all-day programme. First, we will rise early and walk in the streets, singing resurrection songs and proclaiming that Jesus is the King of Kings. With great enthusiasm we will attend the Sunday service where the living word of our Living Savior will be preached. A special lunch will be held to share the love of God. In the evening we will meet again to reflect on the power of our resurrected Lord. The children will show skits and sing songs to tell about Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Many unbelievers will be invited. Please pray that they will believe and accept Jesus as Savior.

-Tarun Nayak



**HOW WILL YOU
AND YOUR KITH AND KIN
CELEBRATE EASTER?**



Nurse Lina surrounded by some of the young ladies from House of Hope

Since last summer when our former nurse had to return home due to her mother's illness, Lina Nayak has served in this capacity at House of Hope.

Twenty-four years of age, she is from Mulkingia village. She accepted Jesus as her personal Savior in 2009, soon after her mother passed away. She has an older brother and sister. After her intermediate college studies, she attended nursing training. She came to House of Hope following her graduation.

Lina is very appreciative of the funds that have been sent to provide medical supplies. When possible, she treats sick children here; but if the child is not improving after two or three days, depending upon the fever, she takes the child to the hospital in Phulabani (50 km away). If the child is admitted she stays. If not, she consults with the doctor, obtains medicine, and brings the child back here for treatment.

She is very kind to all of the children and they love her. Please pray that God will continue to bless her life in His service.

-Tarun Nayak

*May God bless you abundantly
as you continue to store up treasures in Heaven
through your support of Vision India.*

Contact us at: Vision India, PO Box 125, Alamance, NC 27201 **Call us at:** 336-675-4374 **On the Web:** www.vision-india.org **Email:** randy.johnson@vision-india.org **Board of Directors:** Rev. Randy Johnson, Director-USA; Rev. Tarun K. Nayak, Director-India. **Members:** David Jones, Kenneth Cox, Rev. Bruce Ritter, Benjamin Johnson, Dr. Dennis Boone, Bruce Rider, Hoyt E. Stone **Editor:** Ruth W. Johnson.

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March 2014 Donations: \$6150 – Praise the Lord!