

Moonilavu to Hyderabad

Hyderabad, India - February 20, 2008

Naresh:

Up early again, I had a nice walk through the Moonilavu lanes near Pappachins. Studied and trails. Talked to Gramps about the Pakistan elections in the day's newspaper (so that when I went inside, I could impress



Morning walk right

everyone by pretending to read the Malayalam headlines—but Gramps had the last laugh because he'd



Morning walk left

fooled me by not saying that the headline was about Castro resigning—that got me back for fooling him the night before when I pretended to write in Malayalam while really peeking at a picture of a “remove shoes” Malayalam sign on my iPhone).

We had an early breakfast (idly and garbanzoey saucy stuff), took our final photographs, and got a ride to the bus stop. Manoj and Sumi we're worried about our safety, and so walked us to our bus, chose seats,



Family

warned Amy against the nearby toilet, told passenger nuns to protect us (the first people in town



with family

who weren't cousins, but instead were Sisters), and protectively watched over us until they'd talked to the driver (who looked just like Ruben's father Art) to make sure he knew where we'd get off.



Are you sure you'll be OK?

We had an excellent view out the front window of the bus for most of the trip. Usually that would have been extremely scary, but the driver was especially good at his job (as expected of anyone who looks like Ruben's father).

Also, this bus was protected by images on the front window of both Jesus and Ganesh.



Wide-screen view



Art?



Yawn.

The ride took a few hours, during which we saw many towns, and many on the bus got some sleep.



sleeping 3-eyed beauty

The town we got out at (Amalgamation? Or something like that?) was the closest to the airport, and we had quite a few hours remaining. So Amy called her momma,

then we went to lunch and sat around in the restaurant for a while watching people eat. We learned that there are as many styles of utensil-free eating as there are people. Most impressive was that technique of scooping everything into the hand, squeezing, and popping the ball in the mouth.

We walked through a few shops, buying a souvenir here and there, until we'd had enough of heat and shops.

A short taxi ride took us to the airport, where we got to wait longer. Our new



Lunch in restaurant

Moonilavu family had made Amy promise to call when we got to the airport, so they wouldn't worry, but there were no payphones there. Amy borrowed a cell phone from the man closest to us, who turned out to be a



cab to airport

travel agent of sorts and was happy to hear about Pappachins and to take some brochures.

Akbar-the-driver picked us up at the airport (with a sign, of course). Back at Roy Palace we could relax again. We gave Akanksha a wind-up plastic bird we'd bought (she seemed to enjoy it), and ate the pasta dinner Madhumanti had prepared. (I don't know how we'll ever learn to prepare our own meals again when we get back home.)

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