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# JAMES B. THOMPSON, JR.

## DISTINGUISHED INTERNATIONAL LECTURE TOUR 2023-24

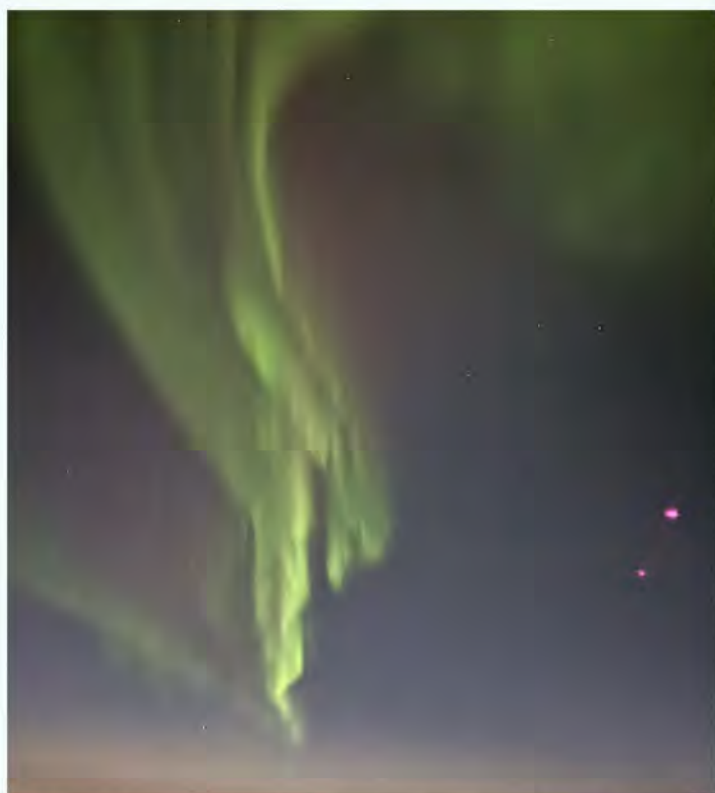
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**Mary Hubbard** - Montana State University

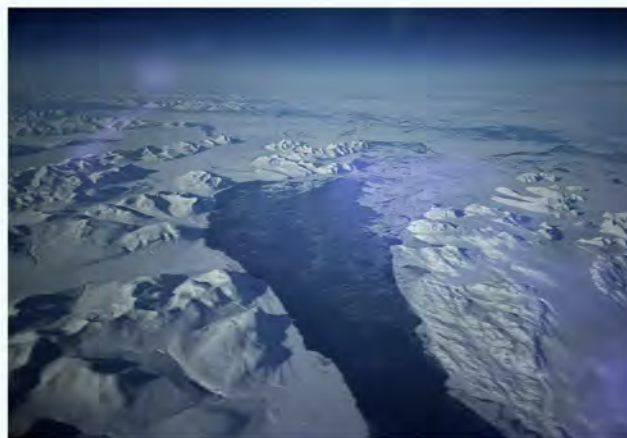
### US, Nepal & Bangladesh

My journey started by traveling with Alaska Airlines from Bozeman, Qatar Air from Seattle through Doha to Kathmandu. I have taken this route several times, but this trip I had the good fortune to see the northern lights and to have clear skies as we crossed Greenland.

A lengthy layover in Doha demanded airport exploration including a visit to the forest in the airport! Arriving in Kathmandu, I began the adjustment process to the familiar sights, sounds, and smells that the city offers. Staff at my hotel are largely the same as worked there a year ago during my Fulbright stay, so it felt a bit like coming home. My six days in Kathmandu were filled with meetings with local colleagues with whom I share projects. To assist with adjusting to the time difference, I attempted to spend time outside walking to some favorite places.



*Northern lights seen from my commercial flight as it crossed northern Canada.*



*Western Greenland showing ice breakup in a fjord system.*

Finally it was time to fly to Dhaka, Bangladesh for my first lectures of this tour. My flight had some delays both on the Kathmandu side of the journey and on arrival in Dhaka. The Dhaka airport has a new terminal under construction. Unfortunately the construction site forces planes to taxi on the one and only runway to get back to the old terminal. Due to busy air traffic, we had to wait our turn to get to the terminal. I was met by the hotel representative and taken to a nice hotel near Dhaka University.



*Flooded agricultural land on the approach into Dhaka.*



*Northern Dhaka as seen before landing.*

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After a good night's sleep, I was ready for my first lecture that was at the Jahangirnagar University. This university's name comes from the old name for Dhaka and that name comes from the Mughal Emperor of the region in the early 1600's. Professor Sakawat Hossain and Professor Sharif Hossain Khan picked me up at the hotel with a driver and a university minivan.

The university was about 45 minutes away on the western side of the city in an area with many trees. I toured the department including the museum. In the museum I found geoscience models made by my father's company in the 1960's! My presentation was well attended by students. Half the students are women. They all asked good questions and were eager to learn new things.



*Mary checks out Hubbard Scientific landform models in the Jahangirnagar University geology museum.*



*Gathering of students at faculty with Mary at Jahangirnagar University.*



*Mary's presentation at Dhaka University.*

Tuesday November 7th was my visit to Dhaka University. My host was the Department Chairman, Dr. Subrota Saha, but the student chapters of AAPG, SEG, and SPE were the organizers for the day. The geology department has space in parts of several buildings some of which are quite new. The lecture hall was the most luxurious lecture hall I have encountered anywhere! Again, many students participated and asked questions following the presentation.

In the evening of the 7th, Dr. Sakawat Hossain from Jahangirnagar University picked me up at the hotel and we ventured out through heavy traffic by rickshaw. For me the ride was quite exciting/terrifying!! We visited a small lake and a handicraft shop before returning to his home where his wife had prepared a nice meal with two kinds of chicken, fish, and mutton!



*Students and faculty who attended Mary's lecture at Dhaka University.*

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On November 8th, I traveled with Dr. Mizanoor Rahman to the far north of Dhaka to the Bangladesh Open University. This university was started in 1992 as an online university with the goal of bringing higher education to people who are working and people in remote areas. Now they have over 200,000 students across the country.

My presentation was mostly attended by faculty members and administrators because the students are remote. The Vice Chancellor is a geologist so after the lecture we had a nice lunch in his home and then did an interview which was video taped and will be on their website. Their campus also includes a mock village for recording informal lectures.



*Bangladesh Open University campus.*



*Bangladesh Open University administrative team with Mary.*



*Bangladesh Open University administrative team shows Mary the mock village that is used to deliver education to rural areas from an informal setting.*

What a pleasure it was to visit these three campuses and to see their differences and similarities. It was inspirational to meet students at Jahangirnagar U. and Dhaka U. and to see their enthusiasm for their studies. I look forward to seeing their careers blossom.

From Dhaka I returned to Kathmandu. My only regret was that I didn't plan any tourist time in Dhaka. Next time!!



*Women students at Dhaka University.*