

## VEERAYATAN RAJGIR FACT SHEET

### INTRODUCTION

The foundation of Veerayatan was laid in 1973. The site of Veerayatan is located at the foot of the Vaibhagiri hills on the outskirts of the ancient city of Rajgir (once the capital of the Magadha empire), Bihar State, India. It covers an area of 40 acres. The site is rich in its historical heritage where the undercurrents of Jainism, Buddhism and the Vedic religion meet.

In the last 28 years Veerayatan has provided free medical treatment for over 750,000 patients.

Veerayatan is home of the world-renown eye hospital- Netra Jyoti Seva Mandiram. Several types of eye surgeries have been performed successfully on patients ranging from 8 months to 96 years of age. Over 100,000 eye surgeries have been performed completely free of charge or highly subsidized in this hospital. The indoor department has a capacity of 150 beds. It is scrupulously clean, well lit, airy, and surrounded by a garden of roses. Basic pathological tests, eyeglasses, medicine, and nutritious meals are provided free of charge. To date (end of 2002), over 100,000 cataract operations have been performed at the hospital by a highly specialized team of dedicated doctors. The installation of computers in patient registration and inventory control has contributed to the efficient running of the hospital.

In addition to eye care, the hospital hosts orthopedic clinics and polio camps several times a month where patients are given prosthetic limbs free of charge. A 50-bed polio hospital was started in 2001. Tricycles and calipers are given to disabled patients to aid in their mobility.

Veerayatan has also taken up the causes of education and clothing distribution. A school has been established in the village of Lachwaad to provide education for a community which has been illiterate for generations. Also, a general dispensary and mobile van have been established to meet the needs of the surrounding village populace.

### GETTING TO AND FROM VEERAYATAN RAJGIR

Volunteers can travel by car from Patna (capital city of Bihar state) to Veerayatan's Rajgir site. The journey takes approximately three hours.

All listed times and schedules of planes and trains are subject to change. The VVP committee strongly advises you to check this information in advance before confirming your travel plans.



**By plane:**

You may book the flight yourself on the Sahara Airlines website ([www.saharaair.com](http://www.saharaair.com)) or Veerayatan staff can reserve the ticket for you.

Delhi to Patna (two flights daily)  
Bombay to Patna (One flight daily)

After reaching Patna, you may take a registered taxi to Veerayatan. With advanced notice, Veerayatan staff can arrange to have you picked up by car in Patna.

**By train:**

From New Delhi -

Daily service: Train number 2402 from New Delhi (departs New Delhi station at 1315) and arrives in Rajgir at 1015 the following morning.

From Mumbai -

From Dadar Terminus: Tue, Thu, Sun: Train no 3448 departs Dadarat 0755, arrives in Patna at 1432 next day. Fri: Train no 5647 departs Dadar at 0755, arrives in Patna at 1432 next day. Wed, Sat: Train no 5645 departs Dadar at 0755, arrives in Patna at 1432 next day.

From Patna to Rajgir:

Daily : Train no 3234 departs Patna at 0915 and arrives in Rajgir at 1130.

Daily: Train no 2402 departs Patna at 0750 and arrives in Rajgir at 1015.

Mon, Wed, and Fri: Train no 5110 departs Patna at 0330 and arrives in Rajgir at 0550.

After reaching Rajgir, you may take a registered taxi to Veerayatan. With advanced notice, Veerayatan staff can arrange to have you picked up at the station in Rajgir

**WEATHER AND CLOTHING**

Weather in the area is divided into three main phases. From September to February, the weather can be quite cold in the morning, but becomes pleasant during the day. The temperature ranges from 25-30 °C / 80-85 °F. Summer season lasts from May to June, when temperatures average 40-45 °C / 105-115 °F. There is a relatively heavy monsoon season from mid-June to August.

Shirts, T-shirts and trousers/jeans are acceptable for both men and women; women may also wear a salwaar kameez or a sari if they wish. Short skirts, shorts and tight fitting tops are not recommended.

For summer participants, wide-brimmed hats and baseball caps are recommended.

For winter participants, sweatshirts, shawls, sweaters, jackets and waterproof jackets may be worn.

Comfortable tennis shoes and slippers are also recommended for both summer and winter participants.

### FOOD AND ACCOMMODATION

Tea/milk and a light food item are provided for breakfast. Two nutritious, filling vegetarian meals are provided daily on campus free of charge. They are composed of the Indian staple foods of rotli (chapatis), shaak (curried vegetables), bhaat (rice), daar (lentil soup), and chaas (buttermilk). Water filtered by Aquaguard is provided for all volunteers. Mineral water or boiled water can be provided upon request.

Accommodation is provided on site free of charge. Beds and bedding will be provided. Please check the newest brochure on [www.veerayatan.org](http://www.veerayatan.org) for pictures of volunteer accommodations.

All-male, all-female closed-concrete bathing quarters have been provided for all volunteers. Showers are usually cold-water bucket baths; running water is available. Buckets will be provided to all volunteers. Please bring a towel.

All-male, all-female closed-concrete squat toilets and western toilets have also been constructed for volunteers. Veerayatan staff takes special care to ensure that these are cleaned regularly.

### SAFETY

Veerayatan's 40-acre Rajgir campus is completely enclosed by a wall. There are also six guards posted on 24-hour duty posted at the entrance and throughout the campus.

To date, there has never been any type of violent crime on Veerayatan's campus in Rajgir.

However, we recommend that volunteers do not leave the campus without notifying a member of the staff. Volunteers who do so may be asked to withdraw from the program and leave Veerayatan's campus permanently.

There is also a safe available for volunteers to place their valuable documents (passport, travellers cheques, etc).

### COMMUNICATION

Family and friends can contact you in the following ways:



- 1) Phone
  - a. They may call and ask directly for you at 06112 55013/55240/55249. Please call only after 7:00 PM (India time) as it will be difficult for us to entertain long calls during office hours (7:00 AM to 7:00 PM).

- 2) Mail
  - a. They may send you letters or packages at the following address:

Veerayatan  
Rajgir, District Nalanda  
803 116  
Bihar, India

You may contact your family and friends in the following way:

- 1) Phone
  - a. Please bring an international calling card with you. You may call directly from Veerayatan's phones using this card

Email access is relatively unstable at this site.

### MEDICAL

Volunteers are advised to take the appropriate vaccinations and malaria tablets before arriving in India. These include vaccinations for Diphtheria, Tetanus, Hepatitis A and B, Encephalitis, Meningitis, Polio, Rabies, Tuberculosis, Typhoid and Yellow fever.

There is a general dispensary on campus, which has standard non-emergency medication for colds, fever, allergies, etc. A doctor can provide a general check up or general medical advice.

### DAILY SCHEDULE AND SAMPLE ITINERARY

Volunteers who volunteer on Veerayatan's Rajgir site will enjoy a relatively flexible schedule, working from 7 to 9 hours everyday. Volunteers can work in the NJSM hospital which hosts several hundred eye patients daily as well as several polio patients. Service can be provided through general administration, speaking with waiting patients, and surveying patients for various personal information needed for hospital records. Volunteers may also help Veerayatan staff as they distribute school supplies and food to local village schools.

### Sample Itinerary for volunteers on Veerayatan, Rajgir campus:

Time	Activity
7 AM	Wake-up
7:30-8:00 AM	Shower
8:00-9:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00-12:00 PM	Visit NJSM hospital; speak to patients and distribute breakfast foods; scrub in and watch an interocular lens surgery; help NJSM Director Dr. Sadhvi Shri Chetnaji with bookkeeping, general administration
12:00-1:00 PM	Lunch; free time
1:00-4:00 PM	Visit local school for disabled boys and local village schools to distribute school supplies and food
3:00-6:00 PM	Visit local Buddhist temple, ropeway and Jain cave art
6:00-7:00 PM	Dinner, free time
7:00-7:30 PM	Prartna- inspirational/motivational talk given by <i>sadhvijis</i> (renunciates)
7:30-10:00 PM	Research and write project proposals for Rajgir site and to obtain resources (lenses, calipers, etc.) from international funding agencies

### LOCAL ATTRACTIONS AND SHOPS

A local bazaar is minutes away, where volunteers can obtain necessary items and check email.

Volunteers can visit a local ropeway, which is an open air container pulled up a mountain by motors and ropes. There are excellent views of surrounding scenery and hills from the ropeway. Volunteers can also explore nearby caves and historical landmarks, and can enjoy treks on nearby hills and mountains.

There are many local religious landmarks that contribute to the rich history of the area. Pavapuri, the final place of Tirthankar Mahavir, is close by, as is a very large Buddhist temple featuring rock gardens and a large statue of the Buddha. Volunteers can also visit the ruins of the ancient, grand Nalanda University.

### LANGUAGE

The predominant languages spoken in the area are Bihari and Hindi. These are also the predominant languages spoken by the Veerayatan staff, though the administrators also converse in English.

### SOME PHRASES IN HINDI

Hello -	Namaste.
Jain Greeting -	Jai Jinendra.
How are you? -	Aap kaise/i he? (m/f)
I am fine/not fine-	Me achi/acha hu/ Me achi/acha nahi hu. (f/m)
What is your name? -	Aap ka naam kya he?
My name is Tom -	Mera naam Tom he.
Where are you from? -	Aap kaha se he?

I am from America -	Me America se hu.
Goodbye -	Namaste
Yes -	Ha
No -	Nahi
Thank you -	Dhanyavada/thank you
Do you speak English -	Kya aap English bolte he?
Please say that again -	Ek baar aur kahiye.