

Obituaries

Matsuki Miyazaki

1900-1972

Leprosy patients in India and Japan sustained an irreparable loss in the death of Japanese-born Dr. Matsuki Miyazaki. This self-effacing humanitarian and noted authority on leprosy was killed when the plane on which he was traveling crashed near New Delhi, India, June 14, 1972.

Dr. Miyazaki, known to his patients in India as the "Schweitzer of Japan," had led a full and active life at the Kaifu-en Leprosarium in Kumamoto Prefecture in Japan until his retirement in 1958. He was then selected to go to India as director of the India Center, Japan Leprosy Mission for Asia (JALMA), at Agra, near the Taj Mahal.

The Center, whose formal designation is, "The India Leprosy Treatment, Rehabilitation Training Center," was built at a cost of 250 million Japanese yen and is a gift to India from JALMA. Members of Japanese

Lions Clubs were in the forefront of those making donations for the center and Dr. Miyazaki was a Lion himself. After the center was opened the good doctor, accompanied by a Japanese medical team and nurses, went there to treat and rehabilitate leprosy patients and to train Indian doctors in his methods. He had completed seven years in India and planned to continue working for leprosy patients until he reached the age of 80.

When he first started out for India, Dr. Miyazaki said: "Foreign missionaries helped us to conquer leprosy in Japan. Now it is time for Japan to help others." He was returning to his patients in India from a meeting in Tokyo of the Japan Leprosy Mission for Asia, when the airliner crashed, killing 84 of the 89 persons aboard. (Adapted from *The Star* 32 [1972] 15)