



Chronicles Of Love

Tawang Medicare Seva August 11th-19th, 2018

*The Journey to Heaven
11-12 August 2018*

Tawang Medicare Seva has always been about pushing the limits and realizing that all it takes to realize one's true self is to go beyond the body and the mind. Our Master says, "Bend the body, Mend the senses, and End the mind". As we write these sentences we realize how blessed we are that the travel from down south to our villages near the Indo China Border itself teaches us precious lessons of life.

The journey from Guwahati to Tawang takes an average of 16 hours and can go up to 19/20 hours in extreme weather conditions. This time the weather took extremities to a higher level. Landslides had totally destroyed the roads further leaving the path in a very difficult state. The Border Roads Organization (B.R.O.) was as always making the roads ready for at least a manageable travel. The hard work of these women and men made the impossible possible as they got to work and were getting things moving in the fastest possible time. The rickety roads had us in serious physical pain and we could feel the bones rattling inside. Mother nature though had our eyes feasting on the majestic sights that were right by the side of the roads we were traveling by. At a height close to 9,200 ft. we were calming ourselves by looking at the hills around us. The B.R.O. was working hours together with no break. The only sounds were of the monster machines at work.



The Road to Heaven



An Indian Army Convoy waits with us. This is everyday life for them. We Salute You.
All of a sudden, the rains came down and along with it came all the soil and slush. A convoy of Indian Army trucks waiting behind us and a few private vehicles like ours were left stranded. Finally, after an hour's wait things got moving and the worst was yet to come. In the rush to get moving, vehicles got stuck in the slush. One mistake and it would be game over! No barricades, no fencing, nothing on the edges at that height! The monster machines then literally rescued a private vehicle by towing it in reverse. The other vehicles then slowly moved. A Convoy of the Indian Army's Trucks were the first to come from the other side downhill. The trucks actually made the path better by flattening the slush on the road with their big tires. By this time the rain had stopped allowing a 'smooth passage' for the vehicles! The Army's trucks waiting behind us then moved ahead of us paving the way for us to then move.



Hats off to the Border Roads Organisation. Working tirelessly and selflessly for the Nation. We Salute You.



Feast for the eyes. View from the road where we got stuck.

We made it to our first break in 7 hours at Baisakhi Garrison. The altitude was 11,500 ft. During this much needed break, Madras Café refuelled us with Love in the form of the yummiest Idlis & Dosas with Sambar. After a cup of coffee, the journey to heaven at 14,000 ft. began. The roads got better compared to the previous stretch and offered some much-needed relief! An hour later we reached the historic and majestic Sela Pass. The weather was just about holding up as we reached Jaswant Singh Garh. After offering our obeisance to the great Soldier who fought for our Nation and to all the Soldiers who are guarding our Nation today, we took a short a break to let the atmosphere sink in. Being in the lap of Mother nature at her pristine best. At 14,000ft we felt like we were being welcomed back Home.



The Majestic Sela Pass.



Up & Up & Up!!!! View from Jaswant Singh Garh Memorial

We made it home to Tawang at 6pm after a car journey of 18 hours. The comfort of the wooden rooms in the freezing cold, made us feel better and after a quick dinner, we prepared for the next morning's Medicare Camp at Kitpi Village. At 9pm, we fell asleep.

August 13th, 2018

Kitpi Village Medicare Camp

At 3:30am, there were sounds in the kitchen and in the rooms where the early risers had started for the day. After a couple of hours everything was set. At 6:00am, hot breakfast was on the table and in half an hour we were done. There was excitement and nervousness as well in the air. We reached Kitpi at 8:00am after a half an hour drive down the hills.

We got to work as soon we reached the venue, the Primary Health Centre in Kitpi. The Doctors' Rooms and the Pharmacy were ready and so was the registration and the diagnostics area. But, there was no electricity. Soon the Staff of the PHC got to work and provided us with a generator that electrified the PHC in a jiffy. The first patients to come in were our old patients who greeted us with smiles that we cherish the most. As they began their journey through the Sai Aashraya flow, there were joyous sounds in the air and there was no guessing here. The Children from Vivekananda Kendriya Vidyalaya had arrived for their health check-up.



Children arrive



Children and Patients Wait in line



The future of our Nation is Here



Treating the tender ears



Ouchhhh!!!! The injections!!



Patients seeking timely guidance



We Love It Say the Tiny Tots!

The patients were being examined with the most loving care and the joy on their faces said it all. The old patients had come with their previous records and there was a remarkable improvement in their health. Blood sugars had come to normal levels, hypertension had come down substantially, and even the heart patients showed

tremendous progress to good health. But, there were new patients many of whom had a tough day which ended well though. The most predominant diagnoses made were various kinds of heart ailments, hypertension, and diabetes (type 2). There were a few rare cases of other serious ailments as well.

There were some instances which brought tears of love flowing down our cheeks. Here are a couple of them. A 77-year-old lady diagnosed with a serious heart problem in our previous Medicare Camp, had come this time. Her prognosis was termed grave after the examination and consultation with our Cardiologist. We had to inform the family. But the Granny was in no mood to let the air be filled with sadness. She lit it up cracking jokes and making fun of us! She admired her own picture and said my eyes are almost invisible when I smile! Oh! The Love of a grandmother! Can't be described in words.



"My eyes are invisible when I Smile says the Granny describing Her own picture"

There was another grandmother who had to collect a lot of medicines which she did with the utmost patience and chose to start back home only after showering us with all Her Love. She walked back in to the pharmacy all the way and handed over a cucumber to one of our volunteers and said, "I have nothing else to give all of You except all my Love and this cucumber from my farm" All work stopped in the pharmacy as the patients and us looked at the Granny with moist eyes. There was Love standing before

us on two feet. The Children were found to be healthy but there was every now and then a child who needed even more detailed examination and one was diagnosed with a heart ailment. The child is being taken care and will be fine soon.



Not just any cucumber..... It's All About Love.....

This extraordinary day had to have the most splendid finish and it came with The Children and Staff and a few of Sai Aashraya's volunteers singing the National Anthem. A little girl ended the ceremony crying out with all her heart "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" ("Glory to Bharat Our Motherland") The hills reverberated with the most Loving rendition of the National Anthem with a band as well. You will have goose bumps when You watch and listen to this clip. When the volunteers who were at the ground came back the last few patients were being seen and the volunteers in the venue said they actually listened to and felt the Anthem ring around the hills and in their hearts.



Group Picture after a soul stirring rendition of the National Anthem

August 14th, 2018
Zemithang Medicare Camp

This was going to be a very fulfilling day. The journey to our adopted village in Zemithang is a very challenging one. Our previous journeys clocked an average of 3.5 hours. This time was to be a very challenging one. The rivers and the falls on the way were at their full flow. The narrow roads had cracked up making things harder. We by the way had a car change due to a puncture that happened the previous night. After a gruelling 4-hour journey we reached our destination, the (Primary Health Centre) Zemithang. A 5am start after waking up really early at 3am. Our volunteers had cooked breakfast and lunch and packed it for us to eat on the way to save time. We had been through the most scenic journey in the world and that's how anyone who has ever been through it would describe the journey. Rivers, waterfalls and mighty hills. Mother nature at her pristine best.

The patients reached the same time as us and in no time, there were a lot of patients waiting for us. Many had come walking from top of the hills, many crossing the river. Mothers carrying their children and walking down all the way. It got tears to our eyes.



Patients queue up for the Medicare Camp in Sai Aashraya's Zemithang Medicare Camp.



They came walking all the way....

The Volunteers set the venue with the staff of the PHC and then the Doctors got to treating the Patients with the utmost care. Some of the Officers from the Indian Army had visited the Medicare Camp and were extremely happy. We feel Blessed to have got an opportunity to treat some of the Jawans and Officers during this Medicare Camp as well. We from Sai Aashraya Salute and Offer our gratitude to the Indian Army for all that

they do, sacrificing their today for our tomorrow. By noon at around 2:00pm we had the great good fortune of being hosted by the Indo Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBP) for lunch. It was the most inspiring experience we had. No words can ever describe the Love and Care showered on us by all the Officers and Soldiers of the ITBP. We Salute them on behalf of all our countrymen and offer our utmost gratitude to them. Post lunch we were still cramped for time and to make things harder the electricity shut down and some of us were running all over contacting people to get a generator started. Our machines had been on battery from 3 hours and slowly began shutting down one after the other. At 4:30pm it began getting dark and as we began feeling extremely sad, the power came. The work resumed and we went on till 7pm when the last patient was tended to with the same Loving Care as the first patient. We wound by 7:45pm after a very fulfilling day. At 11:20pm we got back after driving through heavy rains and the toughest road conditions.



The eyes that tell the story of a life we all must live. This Granny is an Epitome of Love and Sacrifice.

We take this opportunity to Offer our gratitude to the two special volunteers in our team Raju Bhaiyya who has been driving us to Tawang the last 6 times and to Nagen Bhaiyya who joined us this time. These are the best experts and the safest men behind the 4 wheels. Amazing men with patience and expertise in abundance.

August 15th, 2018
Independence Day,
Tawang Monastery Medicare Camp

A Day when all of us recollect the sacrifices made by all our freedom fighters, forefathers to get us independence. A day when we rededicate ourselves to our Nation. Independence Day was being celebrated all over our Nation. Tawang was abuzz early with a lot of activity. Schools set the tone for the day. Dressed in spotless uniform the children celebrated by hoisting the National Flag and singing in unison, the National Anthem. Institutions around did the same with great fervour.



What a way to celebrate Independence Day. Medicare Camp at the Tawang Monastery

We reached the Tawang Monastery at around 8:30am and at the Medicare Camp began at 9:00am with the elder Monks being the first to be treated by the doctors. Their health condition had improved and it brought smiles to all of them. Meanwhile some of the Young Monks arrived jumping and running. It was a sight to behold for everyone present.



Young Monks arrive

There were patients from the nearby villages as well. Some came from far away to be treated. The main findings among the elder monks was hypertension, diabetes, and general weakness and pain in that order. There were multiple heart patients who showed phenomenal improvement. We came across patients who got diagnosed with very rare diseases. A young monk was diagnosed with a very rare disease which could have been fatal had he not come to see the Doctors and speak out. Diagnosed to have cold urticaria, He now can't have cold water or have bath in cold water or even walk in snow. He has to stay warm at all times. This young monk is now being flown to Delhi to see an allergy specialist. Some of the new patients were found to be in extremely critical conditions and were stabilized by Sai Aashraya with medications and further medical management was advised. These were heart patients suffering without knowing what was going on inside of them.

The young monks primarily had skin infections and were diagnosed with varying degrees of infections and medicated accordingly. Scabies topped the diagnoses in skin infection. In the evening, a meeting was organised where the Young Monks and the Elder Monks gathered to discuss with Sai Aashraya about measures to curb further spread of skin infections. It was decided that all blankets and other clothes would be washed and dried immediately.

Then, Young Monks, Elder Monks, and some of the volunteers sang the National Anthem together. The voices of the Young Monks singing The National Anthem reverberated all over the monastery and continues to ring in our hearts. The Medicare camp drew to a close at 7:30pm after which The Monks themselves helped us pack our medicines and other equipments. They had hosted us for lunch as well. We offer our Salutations and gratitude to them for all that they do for us while subtly imparting lessons of being simple and sincere.



Group picture after a soulful rendition of our National Anthem

16th August, 2018
District Hospital Medicare Camp

This was the final day of our 7th Medicare series in Tawang. At 9:00am as we reached the District Hospital, there were patients queued up waiting for us. By the time we set up things in the first floor a large number of patients had arrived. They had come from places as far as 4 hours from the District Hospital.



Patients at Sai Aashraya's Medicare Camp in the District Hospital, Tawang

There were a large number of patients and all the old patients had come. The old patients showed good improvement and were delighted to just meet us and share their story. The new patients who came in were ushered into a new beginning where they developed the faith that they would be well soon and would serve people soon. The patients here came in with a lot of heart issues, some very critical. Sai Aashraya's Cardiologist with the Midas touch had a gruelling day and so did the vastly experienced Doctor who was with the Indian Navy. He picked up heart cases with just his stethoscope and referred the patients to the Cardiologist who took timely measures to get the patients out of danger.

Here is an experience that is ongoing and will make us more aware of the kind of situations that exist in Our Country and make us dwell within to find answers to some questions that we rarely ask ourselves. One of our old patients an 18-year-old who was diagnosed with congenital heart disease in our previous Medicare Camp came in. She had called at 5am in the morning asking if she could come. Her mother had accompanied her on this day. The Consultation was over and our Cardiologist had examined her condition thoroughly. Her situation now required an operation to replace her aortic valve soon. We were taken aback when she came into the pharmacy crying. She looked inconsolable. Her mother looked on despondent and the people around stood in shocked silence. The silence was then broken by a sob that shook everyone to their roots. Her mother does farming to run the family and her father had passed away she said when we asked about her family. We explained her current condition and then a decision was made that Sai Aashraya would take care of her operation. That news did give her a little confidence but she continued to cry. It took about half an hour to console her.

But more news was to arrive and it wasn't good news. We forced her mother to see our Cardiologist as we found her coughing and breathing heavily. She was found to have a heart ailment where two of her valves were having a problem and needed replacement. She was also diagnosed with chronic bronchitis. A chest x ray was done in the hospital and the Doctor said that she was affected by pneumonia as well. An immediate admission was needed. She was admitted in the In-Patient Department and was attended to by the Hospital's Emergency Medical Officer. But the 18-year-old doing her BA (Bachelor of Arts) 1st year chose to handle the situation. She could barely see through her tears we are sure. Yet she looked determined and carried herself in a way which had us in tears.

The Medicare Camp drew to a close at 6:30pm after seeing more and more serious cases some of whom could be solved by medication and some that required operations or procedures.



Our little patient examining our volunteer!!

A total of 600 patients were seen in this 7th series of Loving Medicare In Tawang. A time that bestowed on us the opportunity to serve the people who are the most inspiring and teach us lessons of life that we will treasure and live by. We left Tawang on the morning of the 17th after visiting the Mother of the Braveheart in the In-Patient Department. She received us with a smile none of us can ever forget. An epitome of Love and Compassion. Let us all live for just spreading Love all around us and play our roles well in making the entire universe happy. Jai Hind!

With Abundant Love,
Team Sai Aashraya



Team Sai Aashraya Salutes All Our Soldiers Who Sacrifice Their today for our tomorrow.