



## **Chronicles Of Love - Arunachal Medicare & Gram Seva May 2019**

### **Arunachal Pradesh Gram Seva & Medicare May 26 to June 01, 2019**

*2 years ago was when Sai Ashraya's service projects began in Tawang District, Arunachal Pradesh. This time's Seva had to be even more special for all of us as it was the 2nd anniversary of Sai Ashraya's journey in this heavenly district. After Sai Ashraya's mobile hospital was all set and so was the entire team. On the afternoon of the 26th of May, we started to Arunachal. The forecast was not the most favourable with rains being predicted. A lot of preparation had been put in as usual while planning for the Seva and we braced ourselves for a challenging Seva while enjoying every bit of the buildup to the Seva. The most challenging aspect of the Seva is all the background work that happens. From Communicating with the administration and the local volunteers to getting all the medical equipment ready to the logistics arrangements the list always seems endless! But with some hard work all this gets accomplished and we always have a head start.*



*When the going gets tough the tough get going...*

*We reached Tenga valley in Arunachal Pradesh late on the 26th and straight away headed to our rooms for a good night's sleep. With showers being predicted we needed an early start. The team was up by 4am and preparations began for the journey to our destination way up at 14,000 ft. A quick breakfast and we were on our way. The roads get better each time and the Border Roads Organization (B.R.O.) leaves no stone unturned to ensure this amazing progress. They work round the clock regardless of the weather braving all the odds today so all of us have a wonderful tomorrow. We salute the B.R.O. for all that they do!*

*After reaching close to 10,000 ft. we were in the Baisakhi Garrison of the Indian Army. The rains made the temperatures drop. We got into the Madras Café and got the warmest of welcome from our Jawans who had known us from quite some time. The humility they have just floors anyone who meets them. The Indian Army has helped Sai Aashraya in myriad different ways in the last couple of years and it is a honour for all of us to be guided by them in all the Seva that happens. We salute the Indian Armed forces and offer our heartfelt gratitude to them for all the sacrifices while guarding our Nation! A hot bowl of special Maggi and some coffee made us warm and we were up and ready. Even as the travel resumed the visibility kept getting worse. On reaching 14,000 ft we could barely see the path ahead of us. The rains had created quite the damage and it wasn't getting easy to drive. We slowly made our way through. As we reached Jaswant Singh Garh Memorial we just jumped out of our vehicles and ran to take the blessings and salute one of the bravest soldiers of our Nation. After a quick break, we resumed our journey to Tawang. The weather slowly got better and the visibility improved. Till that point our vehicles had turned into aero planes pushing through the clouds at dizzying heights! The supermen behind the wheels, Raju and Ajay are rich with experience and that's what counts in situations like these. We offer our gratitude to both these supermen!*



*Hats off to both the supermen behind the wheels for driving through these extreme conditions....*

*It was almost evening when we reached our destination and it was so overwhelming to see people come over and welcome us the way they did. Oh! What have we done to merit all this? We had tears in our eyes even as we ate our dinner with all the fresh veggies we had just got. After preparing for the beginning of the*

***Seva the next day we got ready to sleep well and be ready for an action packed 4 days!***

***The rain showers continued from the night before and just didn't stop delaying our start by at least an hour. It was quite an anxious wait as we were worried about how all the people would make it to the venue especially all those who would walk all the way down. Even as we reached the venue, we saw all our patients waiting. They had managed to come down all the way despite the rains.***



***Patients waiting at Sai Aashraya's registration counter in Kitpi. The best part is how all the old patients carry their old records along and how carefully they preserve each paper....***

***Our old patients were the happiest to see us and gave us quite a grand welcome. We had a newly wed couple among our volunteers and the news had spread. There was an air of celebration and all the elder patients Blessed the couple in the traditional way. Some shed tears of joy. This feeling of being in one big ever-expanding family of Loving people makes us do what we do today. We offer our Love & Gratitude to all these wonderful people. The treatment began and the both our Doctors began doing what they do best. Healing people with Love & Care. There was a long queue and we were running all around to ensure that things were in place. The solar panels were not able to get much light and heat to give the necessary back up. But then the sun would come out for a bit making sure that we got just about enough power to do ECGs inside our mobile hospital.***

***There was good improvement in all our old patients. But the changing weather meant that many needed extra medications for cold & cough, fever. The patients with hypertension showed remarkable improvement while the sugars seemed to have stabilised at the right levels. All our heart patients showed positive signs***

*which brought relief to their families and also to all of us. The patients had meticulously followed all the diet plans given to them. It was hard for them to stop all that they had been doing from so many years like stopping the consumption of the local wine, stopping meat and excess salt and sugar consumption. Their efforts had paid off and the results were there for all to see. The families saw lesser tension at home. It was truly a blissful feeling to see such improvement.*



*Some of our grannies taking a group picture....The the first from the right spoke to us in the local language, Monpa, and her daughter translated. She said " All of us are alive because of all of you." Our reply," In fact Dear Dadi Maa we are alive and happy because you teach us what life is. Education is for life not for a mere living and that is what you have taught us"*

*Lunch was prepared by the staff of the PHC and we feasted on some red rice and hot dal. Aloo Gobi was there too and we thoroughly enjoyed the hot food in the biting cold weather. Our Gratitude to the staff of the PHC for always supporting us and making things go smoothly.*

*Even as evening approached, we still had a lot of patients waiting. It had been a tight day for our Doctors but they didn't show the slightest sign of tiredness as they kept at it all the time smilingly. One moving incident that took place shook us all from our roots. On of our patients while Blessing the newlyweds had got special traditional silk shawls as a gift and while draping the shawls began to cry and said looking at the groom who had just recovered from a problem in his leg and had begun to walk barely a month before,*

*Yeh dekh ke hamein itnaa khush ho raha hain naa baap re! Agar Bhagawan ne khud aake hamein duniya ka poora diamond bhi diyaa naa tab bhi hamein itnaa Khushi nahin milegaa. Aap donon ke shaadi ka shaadi huaa hum bhaut khush hain.*

*Ab aap dono aur bhi Seva karo. Bhagawan ne khud aap donon ke bheja hain hamaare liye! Aap donon lambi umar jiyoo, acchha health ke saath aur Khushi Khushi zindagi Jiyoo."*

*"Am so happy to see this. Even if God were to give me all the diamonds on earth I wouldn't be so happy. So happy to see both of you married and we are sure that you'll take care of all of us even more by doing more and more Seva. God has sent you both for taking care of all of us. I Bless you both with a long, healthy, and happy life!"*

*One could hear a pin drop after she spoke. A few moments later all those who were waiting in our pharmacy began congratulating the newlyweds. It felt like another reception in the hills! Slowly all the patients started back home after their treatment as the sun went down. It had been a fulfilling day and even as we headed back, we started working for the next day with all the Love we had received the whole day powering us. Our batteries are never down precisely because of this reason!*

## **Day 2 - Zemithang & Surrounding Villages Medicare Camp 29.05.2019**

*The journey to this heavenly place always begins very early due to the time it takes to get there from where we stay. On an average we take 4 1/2 hours to cover the distance of 90 kilometres. Most of us hadn't slept the whole time in the night due to preparations for the next day. Even as we got up at 3/3:30 am we were very sleepy. There was no respite from the rain showers and we started off at 5:15am with fingers crossed thinking about how the people would come if would rain that way. Our local volunteers have been doing a great job in informing the people about our coming and had arranged for them to come to the Primary Health Centre in Zemithang, our venue. At the half way stage, we were caught in the middle of a heavy rain shower which didn't allow us to have our usual breakfast with nature session! Instead we were confined to our vehicles! The rain wouldn't stop and the visibility got worse with the clouds covering our path. At one point it would clear giving us a breathtaking view of the mighty hills and the next moment it would be fully covered. We moved on clocking a speed of 15km/h at best. We were slow and steady and as the approach to our village began, the weather cleared up all of a sudden. It had been pouring all the while and now the sun was coming out welcoming us!*



*On the way to our heavenly village. Just happy seeing some sunlight...*

Even as we reached the venue there were a lot of patients who had made a neat queue and were waiting at our usual registration area. Most of our old patients were there and it gave us immense joy to see them moving around pain free. We had the honour of serving some of our Jawans from the Sashastra Seema Bal (S.S.B.) and it was an experience that all of us will always cherish. Once again, all the cardiac patients were given first priority. Most of them showed remarkable improvement while there were some who hadn't improved much. One of our old patients about whom we had written before in our blog isn't keeping that well and we all pray that she recovers and is pain free. It was heartening to see an overall improvement in the condition in most of the hypertensive patients and diabetic patients (Type 2 Diabetics). Once again, along with the medicines following the diet & exercise plans helped the patients immensely. Those who had given up the vices of alcohol and tobacco came to us smiling and told us of their efforts and how it had helped them in a way they hadn't imagined. There were a large number of children who required antibiotics and they were taken care specially by our Doctors. It was getting really hard when the line went so long that the volunteers managing the registration couldn't see the last person. People who had come by word of mouth came and told how their neighbours, friends had been impacted by the Love & Care with which they had been treated by Sai Aashraya.

There was a rush in all the departments and it was getting really hectic. The Doctors were working nonstop and it was only after they had treated most of the

patients that they had lunch. Our cardiologist had his lunch only after all of us had finished refuelling!



*Patients queue up outside our venue in Zemithang....*



*One of our old patients. Do you remember her from the previous blogs? She is a true inspiration....*

*As evening approached the rush had come down considerably and there were still people walking from far away coming in ones and twos. Some had started walking hours before. They were taken good care of and we interacted with them about the general well-being of the village. As yet another fulfilling day came to a close at around 5pm, it was a surreal feeling. The number of patients that had come truly had left us speechless. Our hearts were filled with all the Love we had received and we started our journey back to Tawang. It took us 4 ½ hours again but most of us fell asleep. The rough conditions didn't trouble us at all. We woke up at our home stay and were refreshed. As a result, we couldn't sleep that night! After a late dinner we worked for a while getting ready for the Seva in the Tawang Monastery the next day. We couldn't wait to meet all the Lamas and the Young Lamas! It is always a joy meeting them!*

## **Day 3 - Tawang Monastery & Surrounding Villages Medicare Camp 30.05.2019**

*After two challenging days of Seva, we were having good momentum and just wanted to keep the high energy levels going. As we started after breakfast that morning, we again had our doubts about how the Seva would go on in such a heavy downpour. The visibility was bad and thankfully the distance to the Monastery isn't that far. So, we reached there only to see all the Lamas (Elder Monks) waiting for us at the entrance. Even as we alighted from our vehicles, the Lamas helped us carry all our equipment. The staff of the Monastery helped us unload all our medicine trunks and we were all set in no time at all. A large number of people were waiting at the dispensary in the Monastery already. The Doctors came in and got to work straight away. The Elder Monks were the first to be seen. Their health had improved a lot and it was wonderful to see them again. Their presence has a calming influence on everyone around. Even as the people from all the nearby villages came in, the weather just got worse. They had made it just in time somehow. There were patients who had travelled 3 -4 hours to reach the venue. Once again, all the old patients showed good improvement. Even heart patients had recovered considerably. In some cases, the improvement was nothing short of being miraculous.*



*At Sai Ashraya Medicare Camp In The Tawang Monastery...*



*Once again there was celebration in the air with the Lamas & the Patients Blessing the newlyweds. It brings us to tears thinking of how much all these people Love us. Their pure Love is something unmatched. We feel Blessed to have such a big family that is ever expanding.*



*Smiles all around in Sai Aashraya's registration counter in the Tawang Monastery....*

The patients who had come far away had brought their neighbours and friends along with them. Many had taken up the responsibility of bringing all the elders and taking them back home after the treatment. This Love & Selflessness is what makes all these people what they are. One moving incident was that of a grandpa who could barely breathe. His oxygen saturation was down and he was coughing badly too. Even as the volunteers brought him in for oxygen therapy, he didn't seem comfortable. As the volunteers put the cannula in his nose and the oxygen started flowing there was a gentle smile on his face. In ten minutes, he was a lot better and everyone around was happy. The patients around wondered what just had happened. The new oxygen concentrator that we had carried all the way was doing its job. The grandpa got better and was taken good care of. It was challenging when some of the patients came in critical. The Doctors handled the patients in a way only they can and they were put on the perfect treatment after detailed examination.



*Oxygen therapy in progress....*

*The Younger Monks came in making the whole atmosphere feel vibrant with their energy. There were more cases of fungal skin infections this time. After the Young Monks were treated, a discussion took place between Sai Ashraya's volunteers and the Elder Monks about how to curb the spread of skin infection. A plan was made*

*and will be implemented with immediate effect in the Monastery. It had been a hectic day and the last batch of patients were waiting for treatment. Two young girl students from a village near the Bhutan Border had come with their Aunt & Uncle. Their Uncle turned out to be a heart patient who needed detailed examination. Even as we were treating them, these two students came in to the pharmacy to meet us with a request. They said that their village was in a bad shape and the people there are finding it hard to make to the any of the four venues for treatment as the roads are in a terrible condition and some can't even move around. They put forward a request to come and serve the people in their village and said how it would impact the entire village. They even wrote in English a heart-rending letter to our team with the request. We had no words. The students were assured by our volunteers that Sai Aashraya would help them with their education and Sai Aashraya after reaching Bangalore, decided to adopt this village in the coming Seva in August 2019. What big hearts at such a young age! The incident moved us to tears. We then slowly wound up for the day after the last patient was treated with the same Love & Care as the first! The Lamas helped us pack up all our equipment and our Medicines. The Medicine trunks had become way lighter already. We headed back to our place of stay after offering our Gratitude to all the Lamas for everything that they do for us. We truly feel Blessed!*



*One of the little ones lighting up our hearts with a lovely smile....*

## Day 4 - District Hospital Medicare Camp 31.05.2019

*The last day of this edition of Arunachal Pradesh Medicare & Gram Seva was one of the most challenging for the whole team. Even as we got to the venue there were about 50-60 Patients waiting outside the entrance. We were given a warm welcome. The staff of the District Hospital came and helped us set things up real quick and we were ready to begin the Seva.*

*The registration counter was full and the Doctors were having long queues. It was getting more and more hectic. The District Commissioner, Tawang was ushered in by The DMO to the pharmacy. The Administration has always been so supportive of Sai Aashraya's efforts. The DC Tawang was extremely happy and praised Sai Aashraya for all the wonderful work being carried out. The Medical Superintendent and The District Medical Officer have been of such support to us that we always feel overwhelmed.*



*The first batch of patients waiting at Sai Aashraya's registration counter....*

*A number of new cardiac patients had come in but one patient almost had to be airlifted. Sai Aashraya's plans to get an air ambulance had just started taking shape and here was a patient needing such attention. We called up and the administration and did our best to get things moving when the patient was not be seen in the venue. She later came back and we found it hard to convince her. Her husband is a farmer near the Bhutan Border and her children way to young to absorb all this. She has been put on all the necessary medications and will need a Mitral Valve Replacement shortly like quite a few patients in our villages. But here is the problem which the administration and Sai Aashraya are working together to solve. Without a particular test called PT/INR a valve replacement is not the right solution. The test which has to be done twice a month initially will determine the*

***titration of the medications. Without this test being done on a regular basis post valve replacement, a patient will lose his/her life faster with surgery than without the surgery. Now Sai Aashraya is working on procuring these machines and also planning on training the staff to do these blood tests so valve replacement surgeries can be arranged for.***



***Registration in progress....They wait so patiently and that teaches a lesson to all those in a hurry always!***

***Let us all Pray for this patient and all the other patient to recover soon. On this day, we had some young children in whom heart issues were detected thanks to some very intuitive work at the registration counter. With symptoms like dizziness, shortness of breath, slightly slower growth one would normally not see a cardiac issue. But our Doctors train us for all these situations. Two young children one barely 5 months old and the other just 12 were found to have holes in their heart. Treatment plans have been given to them and they are already on their way for treatment to get the holes closed very soon.***



*One of our oldest patients....That loving smile....Truly Divine....*

**Once again, all our old patients showed remarkable improvement and yet again along with medicines, the diet plans being followed has made an impact that is amazing to see. With really short breaks in between, the Doctors and the volunteers had put their best efforts and the results were there for all to see. The smiles in the faces of all the patients. Many so happy just meeting the team! At**

around 8:30pm we began packing up. Two of the staff once again helped us out. The Doctors were assisted by nurses from the Nursing College nearby. The nurses from the Kitpi PHC had assisted the Doctors in the Monastery and the staff from the Zemithang PHC helped us throughout when we were there. We thank them for all the support.

Over the 4 days of Blissful Seva, 550 patients had been treated. So far, 40,000 lives have been touched by Sai Aashraya's holistic Medicare initiative. Sai Aashraya's Gram Seva is gaining momentum and will be expanding further in August 2019, with some more initiatives that will eventually shape all the future service projects in this region.

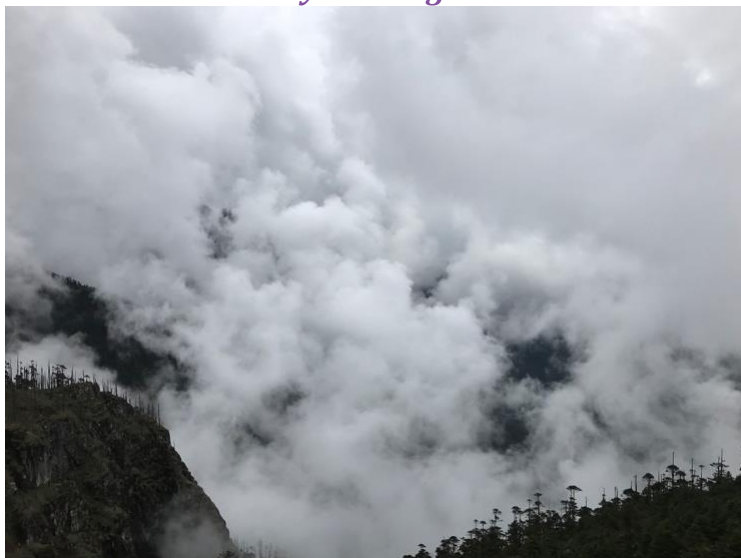


*The nursing staff from Kitpi PHC assisting one of our Doctors in the Tawang Monastery & Surrounding Villages Medicare Camp....*

## **The Journey Back Home from Home**



*On the way back home. There were hail stones falling all over and it also began to snow. We had a really thrilling ride back!!*



*Right below us....From the window of our Mobile Hospital....Disconnected and connected at the same time. While on duty, we enjoy the real connection. The connection between one heart and the other....Heart to Heart ; Love to Love!*

*For the first time we didn't get an opportunity to get a group picture due to the extreme weather! All through the journey back home, we kept thinking about what we could have done better and which are the areas where we should put more focus on. By the time we got Home, we had a big list of things to do and we are on it. We promise to do better each time and make the Seva better with every passing moment. We offer our gratitude to each one of You for always being there in one way or the other. Let us all soak in the bliss of Love & Service and make the best use of our time. We'll get back soon with more updates. Till then, Tagra Raho! Jai Hind!*

*With Abundant Love,  
Team Sai Aashraya*