



Chronicles Of Love - Arunachal Medicare & Gram Seva August 2019

Arunachal Medicare & Gram Seva August 2019

This is one Project that tests all our abilities, makes us put the best efforts, and the reward well it's the best one ever: The smiles on all the faces of the people who have bestowed on us the opportunity to serve them in this heavenly district. Sai Aashraya's mobile hospital started off early as usual from Bangalore and after covering a distance of 3000 kilometres, reached Guwahati, the capital city of Assam. The vehicle had its share of challenges in the first leg of the journey with the fan belt cutting loose in the middle of the night. The two supermen behind the wheels coordinated with Sai Aashraya's volunteers in Bangalore and the vehicle was up and ready in a few hours.

Sai Aashraya's team reached Guwahati on the morning of the 4th and joined the mobile hospital for the beginning of this edition of Arunachal Medicare & Gram Seva. The weather had been terrible in this region over the weeks before and floods had hit Assam affecting millions of people. Arunachal was hit by landslides and an earthquake. Roads were damaged and had to be closed. The Indian Army and the Border Roads Organisation worked tirelessly to ensure that transportation resumed in this region. We Salute Them for everything that they do sacrificing their today for our tomorrow. The weather had improved and our journey to Tenga Valley for the night's halt was extremely pleasant. We had a good night's sleep listening to the sound of the gushing waters of the river behind our rooms. We woke up and early next morning and got ready to travel to Tawang District. As we climbed up, we began to see the impact of the landslides. Huge rocks and boulders had fallen down right in the middle of the roads, trees were uprooted, and we had to be extremely careful while negotiating the turns as the slush would literally pull the vehicles to one side. The weather though was very hot by the normal standards. With a single break for breakfast, we reached Sela pass at an altitude of 14,000 feet. We were short of fuel and the alarm was on. We had a jittery time. Seeing an army unit, we pulled over. Then help came in a way no one expected. We tailed the Major's vehicle on the Daalan (Slope) and then at one of the shops there was some diesel available and the Major ensured that we refuelled well till the next petrol bunk. He then took us to Nuranang where we were hosted for lunch in the unit's dining hall. This was the best lunch we had ever had in these 2 years and more. Mixed Rice, Roti, Daal, and the best ever paneer Gulab Jamoon! It felt surreal sitting where we were. The Indian Army has always been our biggest strength in times of need. We offer our heartfelt Gratitude to them for everything

that they do for Our Nation! We reached Jaswant Garh and once at the memorial we offered our Prayers to Jaswant Baba for a Blissful Seva. All through we struggled with the poor visibility and at those altitudes there is no margin for error. We could feel the unseen hand pulling us through. We reached Tawang town in the evening and as usual were welcomed warmly by all the people. The Mobile Hospital has become a symbol of joy for all. The feeling of being back here is always one that energizes and makes everyone feel at home. The next few hours were important as by night, we had to get ready for the next day's Seva. The Superwomen made some delicious dinner post arranging everything for the next day and the Mobile Hospital was ready quickly too. We slept early waiting for the sun to come up and for the Seva to begin.



Day- 1 – Kitpi Village Medicare Camp – 06.08.2019

The team was up early and everyone got ready for the beginning of this series of Seva. Hot breakfast was ready as always with the hard-working superwomen making it possible for us to eat healthy and stay fresh. They hardly sleep for a week! Working at the registration counter which is the busiest always, welcoming Patients and preparing their records for the Doctors to see and then coming back and preparing food in the night! The work they do can never be fathomed. Post breakfast we started off to our village and the venue for the Medicare Camp was the Primary Health Centre Kitpi. Even as we reached, we saw so many of our Patients waiting to welcome us. We received a warm welcome from all the Patients and the staff of the PHC. We set everything up quickly with the help of the staff and soon our Doctors began to treat their first Patients. There was a long queue at the registration counter. The weather got warmer and warmer and for the first time we didn't need multiple layers of warm clothing!



Patients begin queueing up at our Medicare Camp in Kitpi....Note the bright sunshine....



Registration in progress at our Medicare Camp in Kitpi....

The health of all our old Patients had improved tremendously. Well controlled hypertension and Type 2 diabetes were definitely the highlight. Sai Aashraya's volunteers explain to every patient their specific diet plan which the Patients follow so well. Cardiac Patients also showed remarkable improvement. There was an increase in the number of new Patients coming in and many of them were diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes. They were put on appropriate medications and diet and exercise plans were given to all of them. We always have a lot of moments that become lasting memories. One Granny after her treatment thanked the Doctor Profusely and then Lovingly Presented to him a large cucumber from her farm. These moments take place every time and we had documented a similar experience before as well. But every time it's simply so special and magical. Some of the Patients spoke to us about how they have become so happy after meeting all of us. By evening we still had a lot of Patients waiting and the power supply went off. It was getting cloudy and the solar charge in the inverter had also drained out. We had power just to do one more echocardiogram. Our Cardiologist seemed quite relaxed despite the situation and just as we began to feel helpless, the power returned and we could finish treating all our Patients with the best care possible. Meanwhile one of Sai Aashraya's volunteers went up to the Tawang Monastery to meet the Lamas regarding the camp the day after. It had been a blissfully hectic and a very fulfilling day. As we wound up for the day, we as always found that we had enough energy to keep going for some more time. As one of our Doctors puts it, when we do good work, we get connected to something beyond the limits of the body and the mind and get extra energy to carry out the Seva. The staff as always stayed till the closing time helping us out in winding up. The drive back to Tawang town was great as we sat down and discussed the day's happenings and also learning from our previous experience refuelled in advance. A quick dinner and all of us fell asleep because we had to start at 5 next morning and it was already 10:00pm.



faces outside the consultation room....Smiling

Day – 2 – Zemithang Medicare Camp – 07.08.2019

Jayamaa and Rajmaa the two superwomen were up at 3:00 am getting things ready! The rest of us were literally like zombies at 4:00am, walking like them and we don't know yet how we managed to get into our respective vehicles. It's all a blur! Two of us took the opportunity of the definite 5-hour drive as an opportunity to sleep off on the new CCU Bed. We woke up for breakfast 1 ½ hours later. The next leg of the journey just got harder with the visibility and road conditions just not favouring us. The rains had eaten up the newly made roads as well. After a gruelling 4 hours almost, we reached Primary Health Centre Zemithang our venue.

There were a lot of Patients waiting and we were once again accorded the warmest welcome. There was a festive atmosphere actually! Everyone got to work quickly with all the vibrant energy. We are fuelled by Love truly! We connected our Mobile Hospital to the grid as there was power available and the solar inverter could also be charged. The sun was out and as the registration began, we could see more and more people coming in. We prioritised the elderly grannies and grandpas first for treatment. There were about 10 cardiac Patients right at the start and our cardiologist ever so smilingly continued doing the echocardiograms without having a sip of water! Our Doctor (Surgeon Captain) who had worked across our Nation while serving in the Navy, was having a blissfully hectic time. As we printed each report and handed them over to the Patients who preserve their documents so carefully, they never really asked us about what they contained and not once did those reports worry them! What a lesson for all of us who immediately do our research on the phones we have once we receive any report.



Patients waiting at our registration counter in Zemithang



Meanwhile one of Sai Aashraya's volunteers went up to one of Sai Aashraya's adopted villages, Socktsen, to meet the students of the only school in that area. Gram Seva or Village Service includes Medicare, Educare, Sociocare, and Food & Nutrition. We had carried notebooks, pencils, sharpeners, and erasers for all the children in the school. Stationery is scarce as one would expect in these areas and this would surely help. But what would help more is if someone could guide all these children to do well. One of our volunteers a senior scientist from ISRO counselled the students and interacted with them. The students felt so inspired that all of them said that they would become IAS (Indian Administrative Officers) in the future to serve their society. This school is 9 kilometres from our venue but it takes about 40 minutes to reach. The students were happy to receive 4 long notebooks each, pencils, a sharpener, and an eraser but what made them even happier was the joyful and inspiring interaction.



- *Clockwise from top :-*
- *The view from the school. The school is at an picturesque location 9km away from Zemithang in Socksten, one of Sai Aashraya's adopted villages.*
- *All the children saying that they would serve their country by becoming IAS Officers*
- *Notebooks and other stationery being handed over to the the little ones.*
- *A memorable group picture with the school in the background.*

Once again there was remarkable improvement in the health of all our all our old Patients. Cardiac issues were the most on this day and medicines were issued for 80 days along with diet and exercise plans to all the Patients. Many Patients were a lot healthier than before and conveyed with great joy about how their health had improved and how happy they were. It had been a very fulfilling day and as we wound up the rain showers which had just began got heavier. The staff helped us out with the packing and made sure that we started before the weather got worse. We offer our gratitude to the staff of PHC Zemithang for all the support they give us.



A 3 month old infant....Oh what a smile....Like sunshine on a rainy day!

It was a challenging drive back where the visibility was so poor that we couldn't see a foot ahead of us. It took us about 5 hours to reach back. Imagine the plight of the people who live in places like this. But they are always happy and contented. They know to just be Loving. With everything that we have we are never content and who can guide us better than these people living in this heavenly district! We

had a quick dinner at around 11:30 pm and then slept off reminiscing about the wonderful Seva in Zemithang.

Day – 3 – Tawang Monastery Medicare Camp - 08.08.2019

After coming back that late the previous night after such a hectic day, the superwomen were up at 5am getting things ready. We wake up getting inspired by them. We started to the Tawang Monastery after breakfast and as we reached there were a lot of people waiting outside the dispensary for us. We were given a warm welcome after which all the Patients and staff helped us get ready for the day's Seva. As the registration counter was being set up, more people came in. The superwomen came in and started off the day's Seva quickly. The Doctors were in and there were the nursing staff from PHC Kitpi and a Dentist who came in to help the Doctors out. Their help has definitely made a huge impact especially with the injections and the translation. We offer our gratitude to them.



Registration begins at the Tawang Monastery....

The Elder Lamas (Monks) were the first to be attended to. All of them came in with their old reports and it was a joy to see all of them once again. Their health had improved a lot from the previous time. Well controlled Hypertension and type 2 diabetes being the Highlight. As the Young Monks came in next, they brought in that festive atmosphere all around, something that we are witnessing from 2 years and more now. The Doctors found a spike in the number of skin infections among the Young Monks. With the help of all the Lamas and the Principal of the School, we scheduled a meeting with all the Elder Monks and the Young Monks. The first 10 Patients to see our Cardiologist were all critical heart Patients. We had many heart rending experiences. One of them we narrate here with a Prayer that all will be well soon for all those who are in a similar situation.

This is the life story of a 20-year-old girl who is battling day after day to survive. We had written about her in a previous blog as well. This fighter lost her father at a

very young age and her mother toiled day in and out in her farm to feed the family. When Sai Aashraya came first to this district more than 2 years ago, they came to us. The daughter was diagnosed with a critical heart problem needing a valve replacement (MVR). The mother had pneumonia and cardiac issues as well. While we monitored their progress constantly, we felt that they showed signs of recovery. But all of a sudden, they had been showing no improvement. Instead their condition started worsening. As our cardiologist saw her echo, he called us and said that her valve needed replacement soon. We made arrangements for the same referring her to a hospital in Bangalore even as we worked on getting her insurance where the government would take care of her surgery. The following morning our cardiologist advised against the surgery saying without a perfect follow up locally, she would be at a risk of losing her life. We spoke to the Medical Superintendent of the District Hospital as well and he offered to help her with the insurance immediately. As this 20-year-old came in to the pharmacy to sit down with us, she began to weep. It was hard to get her to stop crying. She took some time and then shared with us that she had been carrying huge stones every day along with her Mother to keep their Home running. This she said was very painful for her but she continued to do it despite all the pain. These dear readers are the situations that many people are in. We are now making effort to ensure that this 20-year old and her mother take their medicines in time and don't work as daily wage labourers. We are looking for an opportunity to make this brilliant mind teach in a school and give her Mother the rest she needs to recover.

As the treatment continued in the Dispensary, a conference was organised in the school courtyard for all the Young Monks and the Elder Monks on the topic Health & Hygiene with particular emphasis on food habits. The Young Monks paid rapt attention and also asked questions during the impromptu Q & A Session. Amidst the clouds, some of the most important things were discussed and surely, we will see improvement very soon.



The best ever conference venue...

The Seva went on till 9pm when the last patient was attended to. It had been a blissfully hectic day for all of us. As always, the Lamas and the staff of the Tawang Monastery made sure that we were at Home during the Camp and also helped us pack all our equipment. Till our vehicles started, they stood out in the cold wishing us all the very best. We offer our heartfelt gratitude to all of them. We are optimistic about some great progress that we are sure will happen very soon in this area. We had a quick dinner at about 10:30pm and fell asleep after getting ready for the final day in this series of Gram Seva & Medicare in Arunachal Pradesh.

Day - 4 - District Hospital Medicare Camp - 09.08.2019

As we reached the District Hospital, we saw a huge number of people waiting in a queue for the Medicare Camp. This line was probably the longest we have seen in two years and more in this location. People from far and wide had come all the way. With the help of some of the patients and the staff of the District Hospital, we set up all our equipment. The Doctors came in soon and the Seva began. There were people everywhere. It got really hard to manage the whole thing but our patients took up that responsibility and showed the way for all those who were new to Sai Ashraya's system. Once again, the first to be seen were all the cardiac patients. But this day wasn't to be the usual. The number of paediatric cardiac issues were more on this day. These children had never been screened before in their lives. One of them had a throat infection which was left untreated for long and she was referred to our cardiologist who decided to do an echo. This 14-year-old girl was diagnosed with a serious heart problem and might need valve replacement in the future. She has been put under medications and we will be monitoring her progress constantly.

One of our Doctors despite the hectic schedule went ahead and gave an impactful presentation on Talcum Powder and Cancers and White Sugar – A Carcinogen. The presentation was an eye opener to everyone present. We will share more details on these topics in the website in a series which will be coming up soon.



At the registration counter in the District Hospital Medicare Camp...

Our Cardiologist was having a hectic day with cardiac cases coming one after the other. Most people who had come early in the morning made way for serious patients and also for people who had to travel a long way to get back home. It was once again a day where Hypertension and Type 2 Diabetes topped the list of common problems with a spike in the number of new Type 2 Diabetes cases along with cardiac issues. It was getting more and more hectic and after almost 12 hours of working tirelessly our cardiologist saw his last patient at 10pm. It was a marathon where some of us felt drained out but a smile here a smile there would just reenergize us completely. The Love that we are showered with is what keeps us going. Love is God; Live in Love says our Master. When we meet all these people, we can clearly feel that they are the very embodiments of selfless Love. They can wait 12 hours without ever cribbing! Instead they come with ways to find out how they can help in their waiting time!

This edition was definitely by far the most challenging Arunachal Pradesh Medicare & Gram Seva for the team. We performed as well as an unit and will strive to do even better next time. We saw about 700 Patients this time around. Over 42,000 Patients have been treated by Sai Aashraya all over India. But what is more important is how an overall impact the Seva has created in the society at large. It is not the treatment or medicines that have enabled this transformation. It is just the magic that only selfless Love can create. At 10:30pm in the night two of the staff

patiently helped us out to pack everything after assisting our Doctors and assisting in the pharmacy the whole day. We offer our gratitude to them and salute them for the Inspiring People that they are. We offer our gratitude to all the people of this heavenly district for having given us an opportunity to Serve them, to The Indian Army and the BRO for all their help and support, the staffs in Kitpi and Zemithang PHCs, The Tawang Monastery, and the District Hospital for all their help and support, to the Administration for their help and guidance especially the District Medical Officer and the Medical Superintendent who have been supporting and guiding us from the very beginning.



Look how curious those little eyes are.... This 4 month old child was found to have a hole in the heart (VSD). Thankfully it is expected to close on it's own....

We made our way back to Guwahati through some extremely tough weather conditions. We just missed a landslide that had happened the previous morning before our travel. The BRO and The Indian Army immediately cleared up the roads making it possible for transportation to resume in the area again. We offer our Gratitude to them and Salute them for all that they do day in and out for Our Nation. The Mobile Hospital will be back Home to Sai Aashraya's Headquarters in Sai Sannidhi, Bangalore in a couple of days. The rest of the team has reached Bangalore and is preparing for the next assignment in Sai Aashraya Adarsh Gram on the 18th of August for the Gram Seva & Medicare there. We will be back with more updates soon. Till then take care. Let us soak in the Bliss of Selfless Love & Service and Discover our true selves. Tagra Raho! Jai Hind!



A beautiful view as we come down from 14,000 ft. to 10,000 ft.



The road conditions on the way back Home from Home....



*With Abundant Love,
Team Sai Aashraya*