

Amritanandamayi Medical Mission in Kashmir benefits 6,000 flood-affected

Friday, October 31, 2014



New Delhi: A medical relief mission that Mata Amritanandamayi Math (MAM) carried out in Kashmir this month for the victims of the Jhelum floods has benefited close to 6,000 people hit by the September tragedy, as the crew has returned to Kerala after treating patients mostly defined by cases of allergies, dysentery, worm infestations and mental trauma.

The Math led by spiritual leader Mata Amritanandamayi Devi also distributed medicines to a low-immunity livestock, and has now braced up to help to the Jammu and Kashmir Government in the reconstruction of fully-damaged houses of the poor in the floods as the Valley is poised for a harsh winter soon.

Earlier this month, two MAM mobile units carrying health and relief facilities backed by 14 doctors besides paramedical staff toured 12 places in the worst-affected Bandipore and Badgam districts in a fortnight-long exercise that began a day after the team reached the state capital of Srinagar on October 9.

The Rs 25-crore facility, equipped with two beds, ultra sonography, X-ray radiography, ventilator, minor operation theatre, delivery room, electro cardiography, light microscopy, digital photography and bio-chemical testing with a semi-auto analyser for hepatitis-B and rat fever, was flagged off from Delhi by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on October 6.

Prominent among the places the team held medical camps in the Valley included Ashtangoo, Kulhama, Laharwalpora, Sumbal, Naugam, Zalpura, Naid Khai, Hajin and Magam. In addition to charity consultation, the Math distributed free medicines, as well as services through its mobile medical facilities for lab tests, ultrasounds, ECG and X-ray. The crew even facilitated two child deliveries, one of them being a case of Caesarian.

Dr Puneet Dhar, who led the MAM medical mission, noted that common diseases plaguing the disaster-hit regions included skin ailments such as scabies, allergies, gastroenteritis, worm infestations, respiratory infections (including children) and pain of the backbone and joints, besides hypertension and gloom.

"We also came across people having diseases that are unrelated to the floods. They included gallstones, diabetes, urinary disorders, dyspepsia and sexual disorders," he revealed. "We tried to give them as much cure as we could simultaneously."

On their part, the rustic beneficiaries expressed gratitude to MAM and Amma, as the Math founder and humanitarian icon is known world-wide.

Said Sajjad Husain of Zalpura village: "We are deeply touched by the services of a good team of doctors all the way from Kerala. On behalf of all villagers, our sincere thanks to Amma."

MAM mission doctors noted that decrease in immunity has made the animals more prone to parasites and infections. "The floods led to loss of animal feed, thereby leading to starvation and high stress level in the animals," a spokesperson said.

As a counter-measure, the team distributed high-quality mineral mixture to around 500 animals, including cows, buffaloes, sheep and horses. De-worming drugs were provided to stop parasitic infections. Some sheep and goats were treated for wounds and minor injuries. Some were also examined for gynecological problems and appropriate advice was given to the owners (for their own good health as well). Ectoparasitocidal drugs were administered to the tick-infected animals. Many were treated for skin problems as well.

Recently, an MAM delegation led by Nijamrita Chaitanya and Brahmachari Amit, recently met state Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and conveyed the Math's willingness to reconstruct houses in the Valley. They also briefed the CM about MAM's activities in the Valley.

The Math distributed around 3,000 blankets in some villages of Kashmir, following suggestions from Bandipore District Commissioner Shah Faesal. These blankets will be given to people who have lost their houses and are now living in tin shelters and under tarpaulin roofs," an MAM spokesperson said, adding that the Math would provide them more blankets in the coming months of biting cold.

The doctors who carried out operations in the Valley were from general medicine and surgery, community medicine, gastro-intestinal surgery, pediatrics, emergency medicine, neuro surgery, dental science and gynecology. A veterinary doctor also was part of the team.

The centrally air-conditioned telemedicine unit was equipped with satellite-based video conferencing facility. The supporting emergency ambulance unit is equipped with ICU and cardiac care facilities, trained medical team and adequate medicines. The signal output from the various devices can be transmitted to Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences hospital in Kochi for expert opinion.

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