

Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service



www.friendsofcrs.co.uk

Charity Commission N° 266302

Inland Revenue N° XN33280

A Report on the Position in Kolkata

September 2020

First of all, a big thank you to everyone who donated so generously to the Covid 19 and Cyclone Amphan appeal. In total, including gift aid recovered, the appeal raised nearly £17,000 from the time it was launched in April to the end of July. The money has made a huge difference to families which had been left in desperate straits. While the initiative for the relief operation came from Bishop Paritosh and Rig David, who were both at the front with their teams delivering the aid, it would not have got off the ground without your support.

Food and medication was delivered to 11 CRS project areas, and 6 Cathedral parishes, reaching nearly 3,000 families. In June, the Government of West Bengal began to distribute food in Kolkata and other districts in West Bengal and so distribution by CRS gradually ceased.

To respond to the needs caused by the cyclone, CRS has acquired 400 tarpaulins and 400 sets of cooking utensils. Distribution has been delayed because of continuing lockdowns, but it started in August, and the intention is to deliver to a total of 11 CRS projects and Cathedral parishes.

Although hard information is difficult to come by, it is clear that cases of Covid in Kolkata continue to rise. One report describes Covid management in some areas as "close to collapse". The Government response is confusing to people and it is of course the poorest who are being hit the hardest.

CRS is keeping in regular contact with the project communities so that they know they are still supported.

Rig David comments as follows:

"Despite the frequent lockdowns, the CRS Team continues to work on the frontline, ensuring that the children are catered for with health clinics and nutrition. In some of the education centres online education has commenced with a few children and their parents participating with great enthusiasm. The women's groups are being encouraged and small numbers have started to attend the skill development courses."

Government-aided and private schools have managed to establish online teaching, but the schools in the slums are mainly excluded from that because of lack of access to online equipment. CRS has proposed acquiring and distributing smart phones to teachers in CRS schools, and to those providing skills training to women's groups. The Trustees have given their support to this proposal, the details and implementation of which are being worked out.

Nari Dana continues to operate with women being brought to the production centres at the Cathedral and in the Bishop's House. They are concentrating on making masks, and have orders for these, as well as several orders for other products.

It is hoped to produce another full newsletter before the end of the year. In the meantime, news continues to be posted on Facebook and the website: <http://www.cathedralreliefservice.net/news/stories>

Thank you for your support



Distribution of Amphan Relief packages at Brace Bridge

If you wish to donate to the Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service,
the bank details are:

CAF Bank Ltd, Sort Code 40-52-40. Account No: 00096998. Account Name:
Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service

Another easy way of donating is through our Just Giving page

<https://www.justgiving.com/calcutta-ccrs>

Enquiries to: secretary@friendsofcrs.co.uk