

Aum Sri Sai Ram

Hurricane Sandy Relief Effort Update

December 5th, 2012

We, the devotees of the Mid-Atlantic Region offer our heartfelt gratitude to our Beloved Swami for protecting us and for the outpour of support from our extended Sai family members across the country. This report is submitted to Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Chairman of the Prashanti Council. This report provides an update on the continuing efforts that we are making with servicing the communities in New York and New Jersey since the last update on November 14, 2012.

CURRENT STATUS

It has been over a month since Hurricane Sandy caused devastation in our Region. There are still pockets of area in NY/NJ where electricity has not been restored and "normalcy" of life is far from being realized in the impacted towns. News reports are forecasting recovery efforts to continue for several months. NY and NJ Governors have put in a request for about \$79 billion in aid for recovery and rebuilding.

NY UPDATE

The Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centers in New York City have been engaged in serving the victims of Storm Sandy over the past few weeks.

In the days after the storm, service was rendered in the Queens College Shelter in Flushing, NY where Sai volunteers supported the City of New York officials in providing supplies and serving the 400 + residents of this temporary shelter setup in the immediate days after the storm. We worked with other Organizations and the City of NY in this effort. Food, Hygiene products, children supplies, clothes and other things were provided to support the residents. Besides, emotional support was also provided by volunteers to the residents who had to abandon homes after being evacuated.

Non-stop cleanup work has been an ongoing activity in the Rockaways area of Queens, NY. Sai volunteers have been visiting these neighborhoods round the clock to support the cleanup, working with home owners and other Organizations on the ground. Cleanup of homes is still continuing, however, these may soon turn to renovating destroyed homes and Sai volunteers are preparing to support this in anyway.

Cooked Food and supplies are being distributed every week in the Rockaways area of Queens, NY after receiving feedback from the ground through volunteers and community Organizations. Supplies served to date, include, Hygiene products, Baby supplies, Blankets, cleanup supplies, canned foods, etc.

NJ UPDATE

Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organization has been coordinating relief efforts to assist those who have been left without basic provisions in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. Several Regions across the country have been sending relief supplies to NJ that are being distributed almost on a daily basis. Items being distribute include Blankets, Baby Diapers, Baby Formula, Baby Food, Baby Wipes, Sleeping Bags, Sox, Stationary Items, School Bag Packs, Pasta, Pasta Sauce, Rice, Canned Food Items, Toiletry Kits, and Toilet Rolls.

Cooked food distribution is continuing in coordination with local organizations' needs.

Listed below are the drop-off and distribution centers that were selected to receive donations based on their strategic location and ability to distribute donations to the victims across the affected areas in a speedy manner. Overall, every effort has been made to help supply these centers with items needed most by residents in the hardest-hit areas.

Recipients of relief supplies have expressed their appreciation for the quality of items being donated. They are pleasantly surprised to receive brand new items (blankets, etc.).

El Centro Catholic Charities, Trenton, NJ

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish/St. Agnes Parish/Mother Teresa School, Highlands, NJ

Lutheran Church Of The Reformation, West Long Branch, NJ

Spring Lake Heights Donation, Spring Lake Heights, NJ

Ocean County Catholic Charities, Lakewood, NJ

St. Francis Community Center, Manahawkin, NJ

Grandmother's Cupboard – Ocean County Chapter, Toms River, NJ

Stephen Siller Foundation – Relief Center, Staten Island, NY

Midland Beach Community – Olympia Activity Center - Relief Efforts, Staten Island, NY

NEXT STEPS

We have received the initial wire transfer from the Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund established by Sathya Sai Society of America. We are grateful to all the donors and to the administrators for their speedy actions. We are researching long term service opportunities where the funds can be deployed.

One of the opportunities being looked into is adoption of a school in Rockaway, NY. We are working with the NYC Department of Education in their efforts to rebuild schools affected by the storm.

Other areas to be explored are adoption of a needy family in NJ or a local school along the coast of NJ.

We express heartfelt gratitude to Swami for making us His instruments in performing service in His name. We are also grateful to the senior members of the Sai Organization and USA National Council officers for their response and support of our efforts. Our sincere thanks to the other Sai Regions in the United States for organizing timely shipment of relief supplies to NY and NJ.

We pray to Swami to for everyone's safety and well being.

Thank you.

Sai Ram.