

Visit to Relief Camps at Manipur through CRWI

After many attempts of the CWRI(Conference of Women Religious in India) throughout the past year of crisis in Manipur, God ordained that the representatives of CRWI visit Manipur during the Holy week of 2024, from 26th March till 2nd April. The Paschal Mystery of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus was more real and intimate to Sisters Molly MSMHC, Executive Director of CRWI and Sr. Ancilla, Generalate Councillor in charge of Education. Experiencing the pain and the agony of thousands of people in their relief camps was indeed a soul touching experience. The visit to the relief camps with provisions and medical care was possible under the direction and the generous help of Sr. Nirmalini through Missio who had shared their resources during the time of crisis, and in particular during the visit to the villages in person. This was the first time, anyone could reach the people of Manipur and witness their suffering in their villages.

In association with the Centre for Development Initiatives (CDI) a unit of the social apostolate of the congregation of MSMHC (Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians), It was possible for the team to visit ten relief camps in Churachandpur and Chandal, the worst hit districts of Manipur in the Maitei and Kukki ethnic conflict started in May 2023. Sr. Ancilla writes, "The situation seemed to be a little calm now as they wait to see the Loksabha elections. Here and there sudden outbreak of unrest is common and we cannot predict what would happen next. But by God's grace we could complete all that had been planned with the staff of CDI i.e, medical camps in two centres, visit to ten relief camps, visit to the places where the campers have been shifted with just a room built for them. We could reach out to about five thousand people who have lost everything they had and have taken shelter in the camps with nothing of their own. They have no future and live the day in pain and misery. It was heartbreaking to see thousands of women, children, youth and senior citizens living in those sheds and dilapidated buildings, so congested and crowded. Even a small cell like room accommodates five to ten people. The depressed faces, with no hope for their future really disturbed us. The CRWI could give them some relief goods like provisions, utensils for families who are settled and medical assistance to people who are suffering with various physical problems.

The church takes much trouble to sponsor the education of children, building small houses and caring for the displaced people around the village. The most needed assistance they said would be medical help, providing facilities for helping them to engage themselves with their traditional work of knitting and weaving and sponsoring the education of at least a few children. The visit to the martyrs' cemetery was indeed heart breaking. 99 young people are buried in a ground given to the villagers after days of protest. The Government is just silent and they say things will get aggravated after the elections. Even providing them with ordinary rations is not regular.

How could we tolerate such ethnic crisis in our country which was known for peace and communal harmony? Yes, the poor always suffer and get displaced in such situations. Manipur is not peaceful ...It continues to be at the mercy of our prayers, generosity and continued assistance through which we can save at least a few who are abandoned and stranded with no hope for their future.



A Silent Good Friday in Manipur Martyrs' Cemetery



Sr. Molly and Sr. Ancilla at Relief Camp



At Relief Camp



Relief Camp



Medical Camp



With Doctors of Medical Camp



Medicines distributed at the Medical Camp



With the staff of the Center for Development Intitatives