

DARJEELING JESUITS OF NORTH BENGAL

DARJEELING JESUITS' COVID-19 RESPONSE NEWSLETTER

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Dear Friends,

Our entire focus in August was to extend free vaccination drive to the villages and tea gardens where people were unable to access vaccines to protect themselves from Covid-19. To a large extent we were able to reach the intended target groups, with the vaccination of 1375 people with our own resources. Another 840 persons were given the first dose with the help of the Health Department, Darjeeling.

In August there were 3 Covid patients (all nurses from the nearby government medical college) in our Safe Home, Matigara. They got themselves discharged after about two weeks, when they tested negative. Right now there is only one patient, above 60 years old.

The next logical step is to plan for the second dose for those who were administered the first jab through our outreach programmes. Now that more government sponsored jabs are beginning to be available, we are trying to explore other avenues where our resources can be better utilised in terms of Covid assistance.

In West Bengal, September is a month to watch as people are beginning to crowd to register themselves to avail the state government's various welfare schemes. The biggest Bengal festival, Puja, is just around the corner (mid October). Still a large section of the population isn't vaccinated even with the first dose. We are yet to receive any vaccine for children (below 18 years).

We'll reach out to the people the best way possible in the months ahead. Your suggestions are most welcome.

Thank you so much for your generosity in being a part of this outreach programme.

Best wishes!

Joe Victor SJ
Convenor, ERT

VACCINATION CAMP AT GAYAGANGA

In response to the Covid – 19 pandemic, Fr Peter Pappu SJ, with the help of Jesuit Community, Catholic Sabha Members, the teachers of St Peter's Primary School and a few nurses from Navjeevan Hospital, organized the camp on 24th August 2021 (Tuesday) at St Peter's Church, Gayaganga for 264 poor people hailing from surrounding tea gardens under the guidance of Fr Lawrence Thanislaus SJ, member of the Emergency Response Team. The beneficiaries were chosen based on their economical conditions irrespective of caste, creed and color. Covishield first dose was administered to all. The purpose of the camp was twofold: to serve the poor and to protect them from any health hazards. The vaccine was administered by Medica North Bengal Clinic, Siliguri as per the Covid-19 guidelines. The camp was sponsored fully by the Darjeeling Jesuits of North Bengal with the help of generous donors. Organizing the vaccination camp is one of the many ways the Darjeeling Jesuits offer their relentless service to the tea workers. The beneficiaries and the organizers are grateful to Shri S Ponnombalam the District Magistrate, Dr Lieu the Deputy CMOH III, Medica North Bengal Clinic, the local administration, Rev Fr John Wilfred Lobo SJ, the Provincial of Darjeeling Jesuit Province, Fr Joe Victor SJ the coordinator of the Emergency Response Team and its members.

FR LAWRENCE THANISLAUS SJ



VACCINATION CAMP AT HATIGHISA

Fr Alex Beck SJ, organized the camp on 26th August 2021 at St Vincent's Church, Hatighisa for 253 poor people hailing from Dam Dama, Atal, Kiran Chandra, Merry View, Bijoy Nagar, Sathbhaiya and Hatighisa tea gardens under the guidance of Fr Lawrence Thanislaus SJ. The Hatighisa Jesuits, Catechists and Staff of St Vincent's School ably assisted him. Most of the beneficiaries were tea workers and they were given Covishield first dose to protect them from any health hazards. The Medica North Bengal Clinic, Siliguri, administered the vaccine sponsored fully by the Darjeeling Jesuits of North Bengal as per the Covid-19 guidelines.

FR LAWRENCE THANISLAUS SJ



VACCINATION CAMP AT LOYOLA HIGH SCHOOL, KELABARI

A vaccination Camp was held at Loyola School, Uttar Salbari (Kelabari) on 28th of August, 2021, sponsored by Darjeeling Jesuits of North Bengal.

The camp was organized here for two reasons:

1.To make vaccination available to a large number of people who went to many places with the hope of getting vaccinated but due to non-availability of vaccines, returned home, after waiting and wasting the whole day in a long queue. Many elderly and the poor people are deprived of vaccination in this area.

2.To bring awareness about safety from Covid-19. Quite a large number of people are still afraid and have misconception about Corona Virus and vaccination.

With the help of the Jesuit community at Loyola Niwas, and some volunteers from among the school staff of Loyola High School, a list of 352 potential beneficiaries was made. Their names were registered with the government portal (www.cowin.com.registration). Input about safety from Covid-19 was given to them.

With the help of staff of Medica North Bengal Clinic, Siliguri, the Vaccination camp was held on the 28th of from 9.30 am to 4.00 pm. Eleven persons who were not registered also came and waited for a long time with the hope of getting vaccinated. Among them was a differently-abled person on a wheel-chair, a few elderly persons, and some construction labourers. They were all vaccinated with extra payment made. Hence, altogether 363 people were vaccinated.



Those who came for vaccination were very happy with the well-organised and systematic way the camp was conducted. They were glad that the camp was held close to their homes. They did not have to wait for long in the queue. The differently abled person, Mr Depchander Oraon said “ I am happy to be vaccinated here. I didn't have to go too far pulling my wheelchair, waiting for long in the queue to be vaccinated”.

FR. BASIL TOPPO SJ



VACCINATION CAMP AT NORTH BENGAL ST XAVIER'S COLLEGE, RAJGANJ



On 18th August, the Second Free Vaccination Camp was organised at North Bengal St Xavier's College, Rajganj, Dist Jalpaiguri, wherein 495 poor people were given the First Dose of COVISHIELD. So many people had not received the first dose and many were frantically searching for places and agencies providing vaccine. This could be gauged from the fact that despite heavy rain in the morning a large crowd from many villages such as Balaigacch, Dubragach, Kheripara, Pabnikheri, Panikauri, Jamurivita, Fatapukur and Shikarpur Tea Garden from Rajganj Block had assembled well before time in front of the college gate to be administered the jab through the staff of Medica North Bengal Clinic.

The local people and the media were all in praise of this humanitarian help funded by the donors of the Darjeeling Jesuits, when a large section of the population, especially the poor, still struggle to get this much needed protective vaccine.

FR. LALIT TIRKEY SJ

VACCINATION CAMP AT SINGLA AND LIMBU BUSTY



The Darjeeling Jesuits of North Bengal in support with the local administration in Darjeeling vaccinated 200 tea garden workers of Tukwar III on the 23rd of August. Again on the 28th August around 640 people were vaccinated in Limbu busty and Singla tea garden. The Darjeeling Jesuits extend our gratitude to all the volunteers and primary health workers and Asha workers of Bijanbari block for vaccinating the people of Limbu busty and Singla tea garden workers.

FR. STANLEY JOSEPH SJ



LOCAL NEWSPAPERS' COVERAGE OF THE VACCINATION DRIVE OF DARJEELING JESUITS OF NORTH BENGAL

More tea workers get vaccine shots at Jesuit camp

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SILIGURI, 26 AUGUST

The Jesuits of North Bengal organised another free Covid-19 vaccination camp at St Vincent's School, Hatighisa, near Siliguri, today.

A total of 253 people were given their first dose of the vaccine in the camp that was sponsored by the Darjeeling Jesuits of North Bengal and organised by Fr Alex Beck, the pastor of RC St Vincent's Church, under the leadership of Fr Lawrence Thanislaus, the Headmaster of St Vincent's High School.

"The beneficiaries today were poor people from tea gar-



dens like Merry View, Dam Dama, Atal, Sathbhaiya, Kiran Chandra, Bijoy Nagar and Hatighisa under the Naxalbari Block, and the vaccines were administered in association with Medica North Bengal Clinic, Siliguri," Fr Thanislaus said.

"The purpose of the camp

was to save the poor from Covid-19 and help the government reach out to as many people as possible with the vaccines," he added.

According to him, the second doses will also be administered free of cost in October to those who received their first doses in the Jesuit



camps there.

He also thanked the Darjeeling District Magistrate, S Ponnambalam, Dy CMOH Dr Lieu, Rev Fr John Wilfred Lobo, the Provincial, Fr Joe Victor, the coordinator of the emergency relief team, members of the ERT team and the staff of St Vincent's School for

the successful camp.

It may be mentioned here that St Vincent's High School at Gayaganga near Bagdogra organised a free Covid-19 vaccination camp for tea garden workers on 24 August, where a total of 264 individuals were given their first Covishield shots.



Tea workers given shots in Jesuit Covid vaccine camp

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SILIGURI, 25 AUGUST

St Vincent's High School at Gayaganga near Bagdogra in Siliguri organised a free Covid-19 vaccination camp for tea garden workers yesterday, where a total of 264 individuals were given their first Covishield shots.

According to Fr Lawrence Thanislaus, the Headmaster of the school, he organised the much-needed camp at St Peter's Church, Gayaganga, on behalf of the Darjeeling Jesuits of North Bengal.

"The camp was fully sponsored by the Darjeeling Jesuits of North Bengal and it was solely for the poor tea garden people, who cannot afford to have paid vaccine. By this vaccination drive, we wanted to show our solidarity with the people and to reach out to many," Fr Thanislaus said.



According to him, Darjeeling Jesuits are serving the people irrespective of caste, creed and colour in the entire region of North Bengal. St Peter's Church is known for serving poor tea garden workers. "Fr Peter Pappu SJ, the present Pastor of the Church, along with his community members, works tirelessly to

empower the powerless," Fr Thanislaus said.

"The Jesuits are at the service of others, searching 'Magis' (Latin word) meaning 'more' or 'greater' in all that we do and work for the greater glory of our Creator. The free vaccination camp sponsored completely by the Darjeeling Jesuits of North

Bengal was one such example to reach out to humanity. The beneficiaries were chosen on the basis of their economic condition in their families during this pandemic," he added.

Medica North Bengal Clinic in Siliguri helped the cause with their expertise, it is learnt. According to Fr Pappu,



the purpose of the camp was twofold—to serve and protect people from further waves of Covid-19 and to help governments in their effort to administer the vaccine to the people of India.

"At this juncture, I express my sincere gratitude to Shri S Ponnambalam, the District Magistrate (Darjeeling), Dy

CMOH-III Dr Lieu, Medica North Bengal Clinic, Rev Fr John Wilfred Lobo SJ, the Provincial of the Darjeeling Jesuits, Fr Joe Victor SJ, the Coordinator of the Emergency Response Team and its members, and the local administration for their continuous support," Fr Thanislaus said.

সেন্ট জেভিয়ার্সের বিনামূল্যে টিকা

শিলিগুড়ি, ১৮ আগস্ট : নর্থবেঙ্গল সেন্ট জেভিয়ার্স কলেজ ২৫ জুলাই বিনামূল্যে প্রথম করোনা টিকাকরণ শিবিরের আয়োজন করেছিল। সেই শিবিরে সাক্ষরতার পর তারা বুধবার কলেজের কাছাকাছি স্থাপিত বিনামূল্যে দ্বিতীয় টিকাকরণ শিবিরের আয়োজন করে। সহযোগিতায় ছিল মেডিকা নর্থবেঙ্গল ক্লিনিক। কলেজের দু'বা পরিচালন সম্বন্ধে তথ্য মাথালিমে জেসুইট অফ নর্থবেঙ্গল (ডিএনবি)-এর আর্থিক সহযোগিতায় কোভিড-১৯-এর ৫০০টি ডোজ এসিন সকালে কলেজে এসে পৌঁছায়। কলেজের পার্শ্ববর্তী অঞ্চলের অসহযোগিতা এই টিকাকরণ শিবিরে অংশ নেয়। প্রথম শিবিরে টিকাকরণের সংখ্যা ছিল ২৭০। এদিনের শিবিরও সাক্ষরতার সঙ্গে সংঘটিত হয়েছে।

Jesuit college provides free vaccines to the poor and needy

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SILIGURI, 18 AUGUST

North Bengal St Xavier's College in Rajganj today successfully conducted the Second Free Vaccination Camp. The college's parent body, Darjeeling Jesuits of North Bengal (DJNB), funded 500 doses of Covishield for the poor, elderly and other vulnerable groups.

According to college officials, the beneficiaries of the second camp were poor people from Balaigach, Kherpara, Dubragach, Farapukur, Jamriva, Panikauri, Savdavita, Pubnikheri, Shikarpur TE Mongradangi, and Sitaguri in Jalpaiguri district, besides some parents and students of the college. The vaccination



camp was handled by Medica North Bengal Clinic, Siliguri. According to the Principal of the college, Fr Lalit P

Tirkey, the college had organised the First Vaccination Camp on 25 July, in which 270 poor people under Rajganj Block of Jalpaiguri District were vaccinated.

"These are the people who, despite visiting the local government health departments or hospitals, had not received the first dose. To address this crying need of the people and to help them protect themselves, Darjeeling Jesuits of North Bengal, the parent body of the college decided to mobilise funds to sponsor the first dose of vaccines," Fr Tirkey said.

"In the future, if there is a great need for the second dose, the parent body will once again try to organise another free camp," he added.

चाय श्रमिकों के लिए निःशुल्क टीकाकरण

काशी (हरिद्वार जिला)। श्री. ललित तिरकी ने बताया कि निःशुल्क टीकाकरण के लिए, दार्जिलिंग जेसुइट्स ऑफ नॉर्थ बंगाल ने 25 जुलाई को 270 गरीब लोगों को टीका करा था।

