

FREE BLANKET DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM, DECEMBER 2019

(A joint initiative by Lion's International Club, Naihati & Halisahar Gurudwara)

WINTER BREAK 2019 REPORT

BY

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ABSTRACT

An idea popped up into my mind for helping the poor people who sleep on the sidewalks, roads and other public places in the chilling winter. The idea was to provide free blanket to the needy by a targeted ticketing approach. Tickets were distributed beforehand to the needy people depending upon their family size and they were told the venue and the timing for collecting the free blanket. The Halisahar gurudwara provided all the logistic and necessary infrastructure for conducting the program. The cost of procurement of blankets was done by a 50-50 basis between the Gurudwara and thje Lion's club. I acted as a facilitator between the gurudwara committee and the Lion's club and managed & oversaw everything.

CONCEPT NOTE

The main idea behind the free distribution of blanket was a sole fact that there were many people who have to sleep in street in the chilling winter. It's not possible for them to afford a sustainable housing in a metropolitan city like Calcutta, hence, they sleep on sidewalks and other public places. Many people especially the kids and the elderly who sleep in open in the winter often fall critically ill due the wrath of winter and at times lose their lives. Hence, we along with Lion's International Club, Naihati took the effort to distribute free blankets to the needy.



OBJECTIVE

To provide free blanket to the poor and needy.

PRELIMINARY PREPARATIONS

- Collaborated with Lion's International Club, Naihati & Halisahar Gurudwara.
- Explained them my idea of distributing free blankets to the needy.
- Mediated between Lion's club and Halisahar Gurudwara and negotiated the deal to fund the even in a 50:50 ratio between the club and the gurudwara.
- Identified the number of blankets we require & also ordered the same.

- Printed tickets for free blanket distribution and distributed those tickets among the people were in need of blankets. More tickets were given to families which had more members.
- Gurudwara Volunteers and Lions club volunteer distributed the tickets.
- Informed the ticket holder to be on the venue to collect the free blankets by showing the tickets.
- Logistic for conducting the program was never a problem because Halisahar gurudwara had committed us to provide the infrastructure to conduct the program in the martyrdom day of Guru Teg Bahadur. We used the same logistic that was used by the gurudwara for conducting the martyrdom celebration of Guru Teg Bahadur.



CONDUCTING THE PROGRAM

- The program was conducted on 29th December 2019, which also happen to be martyrdom day of Guru Teg Bahadur, the tenth Sikh Guru.
- Firstly, Kirtan and langar (free food) was organized by the Halisahar gurudwara. Everyone enjoyed the warm & tasty food.
- Then, the free blankets were distributed to people who had the free blanket ticket. The free blanket distribution program was inaugurated by the president of Lion's Club Naihati & the secretary of Halisahar gurudwara.

- The number of people was huge, around 400 – 500. Hence, the gurudwara volunteers and lion’s club volunteer helped us manage the crowd.
- Furthermore, after the needy people got their respective blankets they were again offered the langar. Some of them took the food to their homes too.
- During the distribution, a person kept on stating the precautionary measures that one need to take during winter on microphone.

RESPONSE

- There was a smile on everyone who got the blankets. We distributed multiple blankets to individual who had big families, kids and elderly.

FUTURE PLAN OF ACTION

The collaboration between Lion’s International club and Halisahar gurudwara was a win-a-win situation for everyone. I look forward to conduct more such initiative the help of the Gurudwara and the Lion’s club.



SUGGESTION & CONCLUSION

- Conducting this kind of program was very challenging as well as satisfying at the same time.

- We reached to the target individuals very efficiently through the ticketing system. The volunteer went to family to family of the needy to distribute the tickets.
- The whole purpose of this was to verify the number of people in a family and distribute the tickets accordingly, so that we can reach out to maximum number of people.
- My primary task was to facilitate the collaboration between the gurudwara and the Lion's club and chalk out the plans, dates, procurements of blankets, vendor etc. I acted in my capacity of facilitating & overseeing everything with the help of my volunteers from the gurudwara. I also kept a close contact and updated the lion's club members and volunteer about each and everything relating the event.

