

## Lioncare

### The Lionheart Society Pays Visit to Patients Infected with Final Stage Leprosy

(19 December 2017)



Victims infected with advanced stage leprosy are the most pitiful as they suffer the greatest amount of physical disfigurement and helplessness. Yet, they are the least thought of and even more so the most neglected, feared and generally ostracized. Although considerable progress has been made in the fight against leprosy as well as better understanding and acceptance of the disease, negative perception towards its victims remain prevalent especially to those who are poor and needy. Many still believe that it is a highly communicable disease although the fact is that transmission is only possible if one's normal immunity is weak. It takes about 10 years from the onset of the infection until it develops into its end stage so there is actually ample time for proper medication and healing if done immediately. However, sadly the effects of the disease are permanent disability. As bacteria spreads all over the body, it attacks nerve endings, destroying the ability to feel pain and injury, causing inability to sense injuries, so victims become susceptible to sores and infections which eventually leads to the loss of fingers, hands, toes and feet, teeth, hearing, blindness and facial disfigurement. During the Lionheart Society's visit, we were able to observe the production of prosthetics for the

patients. At the Raj Pracha Samasai Institute, many of these victims are brought in by relatives and left in the care of the hospital; most have been abandoned and rarely visited by any friends or family, for some even as long as 10 years.

Through our Lioncare project, we hope to reach out to these elderly victims and let them know that there are still others who understand their sufferings and hear their needs. Aside from chatting with the patients, we likewise gave out items of daily basic needs and monetary assistance for other hospital expenses including social activities such as group excursions which takes place three times a year. On this occasion, we also visited the leper community with a population of 600-700, located behind the hospital and distributed rice and other everyday items to the families.

Our support for the leprosy victims and their families will continue to be one of Lionheart Society's most important projects.

