

Monetary Relief Aid to Typhoon Survivors in Philippines

Written by Lineth Brondiale

Friday, 29 November 2013 13:17



With so much love from Master Cheng Yen and all Tzu Chi volunteers around the world, Tzu Chi Foundation held monetary relief aid to typhoon survivors in the Philippines who were turned homeless after the catastrophic Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan).

The first day of cash aid distribution has started on November 23, benefitting a total of 2,834 in the barangays of Camp Downes, Can Adieng, Ipil, Punta, and Curva, all in Ormoc City.

Residents from the barangays of Linao, San Pablo, Biliboy, and Liloan also benefited from this relief activity in the next day.

Tzu Chi volunteers have conducted a disaster survey during the previous week to identify the aforementioned barangays as the hardest-hit areas in the city.

The cash aid is given alongside a thermal blanket, a pack of used clothing, and 20-kilo rice.

“In Tzu Chi Philippines’ history, this is the first time that we have given a huge monetary aid,” says Alfredo Li, Tzu Chi Foundation Philippines CEO . The monetary relief aid is categorized depending on the number of members in a family: P8,000 for one to two members, P12,000 for three to four members, and 15,000 for five or more members.



“Most important of all is to share the blessings of Master Cheng Yen and all the volunteers worldwide,” adds Li.

In the program during the relief activity, Li emphasizes that the monetary aid given to typhoon survivors is a collection of love from people of all walks of life. “Before putting the cash in the envelopes, Tzu Chi volunteers around the world have gone out in the streets to solicit donations. They put behind their reservations knowing how many people in our country need help.”

Moved by the outpouring of love for the Philippines, Li and his fellow volunteers in the country have been carrying out Tzu Chi’s relief efforts in Leyte simultaneously. With his voice now croaky, Li says he may be physically tired but not his heart.

“We may not have enough sleep these days but we are happy just seeing the grateful smiles of the beneficiaries as they receive relief goods.” Li has also been in Tacloban City since November 19 to help carry out the cash-for-work program, which allows the residents to earn P500 in a day by cleaning up their own houses and streets.

Tzu Chi Foundation also hopes to bring more help in Tacloban City in order to fully help them

Monetary Relief Aid to Typhoon Survivors in Philippines

Written by Lineth Brondiale
Friday, 29 November 2013 13:17

rebuild their homes.



Renewed hopes after 'Yolanda'

Molato, 67, is filled with gratitude that she will be able to rebuild her home, actually even way better than the house swept by the typhoon.

"I live at a coastal area. My house was totally destroyed at the height of the typhoon because it's only made of bamboo and nipa*," she says. At the moment, she shelters at a temporary home, made of plastic tarps and felled tree branches, which she built on her own. "Sleeping is difficult too especially when it rains," she adds.

With the P8,000 cash gift she received together with the goods, Molato could not hide her joy. She admits it is the first time for her to get hold of such huge amount. "P1,000 or P2,000 is big enough for me. Thank you very much for this help. I will use it to buy some iron sheets, plywood, and lumbers," she says.

Her 31-year-old daughter, whose house was also completely washed out, has also received same cash gift for her own family.

Father of six Rene Lacandula is also very grateful for the cash relief. They lost all of their roofs from the strong winds of the typhoon and even after two weeks, they haven't been able to buy new iron sheets.

"We don't have money to buy construction materials but because of you, we can now rebuild our house. We feel very fortunate for your assistance," he says.



A carpenter, Lacandula says he is lucky that he will be able to save on the labor costs.

Attending the programs on that day is Representative Lucy Torres-Gomez who says she is overwhelmed by the kindness shown by Tzu Chi Foundation.

"I am overwhelmed because we have never had this kind of generosity. The seeds (of love) have been sown among us and will continue to grow in the future," she relates.

Gomez met with Tzu Chi volunteers at the foundation's main office in Quezon City upon knowing its plan to conduct a relief distribution in the area. She has reported on the damages in the city after the typhoon and told that 95 per cent of the total 110 barangays have been

Monetary Relief Aid to Typhoon Survivors in Philippines

Written by Lineth Brondiale
Friday, 29 November 2013 13:17

affected.

As an initial response, Tzu Chi volunteers have travelled to the city to personally conduct disaster surveys from November 13-16. Medical missions and relief distributions have also been held within these dates.

Gomez lauds the foundation for keeping its word to deliver aid to typhoon survivors in Eastern Visayas. Simultaneous relief missions are being carried out by the foundation in Ormoc and Tacloban cities.



“I wanted to burst into tears because you have come to personally see the condition of the survivors. Every night, they sleep without roofs; every night, it rains. Their suffering has been going on for two weeks but then you came and there is this bright moment for them when they can be truly happy,” she says.

Meanwhile, George Chang, Director of Tzu Chi New York Chapter, U.S.A., says he is glad that the inspiration of Tzu Chi’s founder Master Cheng Yen is passed on to the typhoon survivors.

“Like all of the recipients, we are also grateful and happy for this opportunity. Our hearts, as volunteers, are filled with joy, peace and gratitude,” he mentions.

Chang is also moved by the act of charity shown by the typhoon survivors as they deposited their donations to help further the missions of Tzu Chi Foundation.

“I know that these people are suffering, they need money but still, they put a handful of coins from their pockets to donate. This proves that as long as we have shared the same love, we can inspire the people in need,” he concludes.

*A large palm. It has long leaves that often used for thatching.

By Lineth Brondiale