GUEST EDITORIAL

Brief History of Red Cross

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1. Red Cross is Service Orientated Organization spread over in 196 Nations and functions abiding by its Fundamental Principles.¹

2. **Fundamental Principles of Red Cross**

   1. Humanity - We serve people, but not systems.
   2. Impartiality - We care for every one without discrimination but we prioritize the most needy
   3. Neutrality - We take initiatives, but never sides.
   4. Independence - We bow to need, but not to any person.
   5. Voluntary service - We work around the clock, but never personal gain.
   6. Unity - We have many talents, but a single idea.
   7. Universality - We respect nations, but our work knows no bounds.

3. Red Cross Establishment: Jean Henry Dunant, a Swiss business man in his young age visited Italy for business purpose. There he witnessed Franco - Austrian War in 1859. Thousands of Soldiers either died or wounded. He got exhausted by seeing the Pathetic condition of war field. He immediately involved in relief services with the help of local community keeping his business aside.

   He suggested formation of permanent National Relief Societies for Volunteers to care of the wounded in War time through booklet “A memory of Solferino” in the year of 1862. A year after release of that booklet, an International Conference was convened in Geneva for considering the suggestion of Henry Dunant and thus the Red Cross movement was born with effect from 23rd October 1863.²

   He was awarded the First Nobel Peace Prize in the year 1901 and in his memory, his Date of Birth 8th May is being celebrated every year as World Red Cross Day all over the World.

4. **The Emblems:**

   The Red Cross or Red Crescent emblem can be used by those who belong to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the Army Medical Services of the country. They are involved in humanitarian work mainly in times of armed conflicts and natural disasters. At present, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement use the Red Cross, the Red Crescent and the Red Crystal as emblems. The Geneva Conventions define the use of these protective symbols in times of war. When the first Convention was adopted in 1864, it was clear that a symbol would be needed to provide safety to the Red Cross workers when they are working in the field and also to give protection to Red Cross establishments, equipments and relief supplies. The symbols protect individuals who do not take part in hostilities such as civilians, the wounded and sick, and objects such as hospitals or vehicles in war zones.

   The original choice was the reversed flag of Switzerland. This was chosen due to its neutrality as well as to honour the host country. Later it became clear that the Red Cross emblem caused discomfort to some countries. In 1929, the Red Crescent and Red Lion & the Sun were formally adopted as protective emblems. Since then Red Crescent is being used by many Islamic countries. In the year 2006 another emblem, i.e. Red Cross.
Crystal, has been adopted as an emblem for the movement. At present only Israel is using this emblem.

The emblems, apart from being used for protective purposes on the battlefield, are also used as indicative symbols for all the work of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world (Figure 1).

**Origin of Indian Red Cross Society**

Need for Red Cross in India arose to care for sick and wounded soldiers of World War- I in 1914. A bill to constitute the Indian Red Cross Society was introduced in the Indian Legislative Council on 3rd March 1920 by Sir Claude Hill, Member of the Viceroy’s Executive Council. The bill was passed on 17th March 1920 and became Act XV of 1920 with the assent of the Governor General on the 20th March 1920. The act was amended in 1992 and rules were formed in 1994. Indian Red Cross Society is a member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Figure 2).

Indian Red Cross Society presently has 29 states, 7 union territories (total 36 state / UT branches) including the National Capital Region of Delhi. At the grass root level it has more than 700 district and sub-district branches (Figure 3).

Indian Red Cross Society activities extended to the States in the year 1956 and District Level in 1963.

**Red Cross Emblem**

“Red Cross” on a white background is the emblem of Red Cross recognized in 1864 as the distinctive sign for medical relief teams on the battlefield.

**Programs and Activities:**

The Indian Red Cross’s programmes are grouped into four main core areas:

- Promoting humanitarian principles and values;
- Disaster response;
- Disaster preparedness; and
- Health and Care in the Community.

- Social Emergency Response Volunteer (SERV)
- Blood Centre
- Livelihood Programme
- Education and Training Programme
- Family News Service
- Junior & Youth Red Cross

**Services being extended at Hanumakonda District**

**Blood Bank:** Full fledged blood bank is functioning since 2002. 50% of the blood required to patients under
treatment in the hospitals located in the composite Warangal districts is being supplied from IRCS Blood Centre.

Thalassemia & Sickle Cell Transfusion Centre:
Started from 14th September 2014. 386 patients from composite Warangal and neighboring districts registered their name in the centre and transfusion performed on free of cost till February 2020. There after Aarogyasree facility extended to 189 patients who fulfilled Aarogyasree norms and free transfusion continued to others.

Generic Medical Outlets: one at IRCS Premises, another at Govt. maternity Hospital and third one at Mahatma Gandhi Hospital were established and branded company medicines are being supplied on much cheaper rate to the patients.

Diagnostic Centre: A Centre with an idea to perform 24 different tests is opened fixing charges very less than other diagnostic centers.

SERV: Imparted training to the HPCL Employees working at Kamalapur Plant in Hanumakonda District.

DDRC: This branch has been nominated as implementing agency and the proposals referred by the State Government are under consideration at Central Government level.

Corona Virus Pandemic Response:
Medicine Kits, Masks, Face Shields, Gloves, Sanitizers, Soaps, Ration supplied to the public during Pandemic. 15 Oxygen Concentrators, 100 Pulse Oximeters kept ready for usage of sufferers.

Tailoring: 7 Stitching Machines were provided to the interested females for training purpose.

End Note

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Conflict of Interest: None declared

References