

redcross+

MCI (P) 018/03/2015 | ISSUE TWO 2015

A newsletter by the Singapore Red Cross



**Singapore
Red Cross
Extends
Aid To Nepal**

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Cover photo credit:
Ashley Chen, Volunteer

TRIBUTE TO MR LEE KUAN YEW

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Sec Gen's note



This month, we joined our brothers and sisters in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to commemorate World Red Cross Day. On this special day every year, we look back at how the Movement was founded, out of the suffering of a violent war and a humanitarian

desire to bring assistance to all the wounded without any discrimination or distinction of sides. More than 150 years after its founding, the Movement is as relevant as ever. The increasing number of conflicts and violence, together with the increasing severity and complexity of natural disasters, only serve to remind us of the importance of the work of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

Most recently, we have all been deeply saddened by the loss of lives and the damage wrought by the devastating Nepal earthquake. The Singapore Red Cross made an initial contribution of S\$200,000 of immediate relief items comprising shelter kits and household kits. With thousands who have lost their homes or denied access to their homes because of the continuing aftershocks, these items will come in very useful. We also launched an urgent public appeal, with the Singapore Government pledging S\$250,000 as seed money towards the fund. We are truly heartened by the overwhelming support received. Singaporeans from all walks of life have been streaming through our doors since the day we launched the appeal to make their donations. Others have sent in their cheques or made their contributions through the various available channels. To date, we have collected more than S\$6.7 million. We are working closely with our Movement partners in ensuring that the funds collected are effectively used to deliver essential humanitarian aid to survivors in need and subsequently in the rebuilding efforts.

Many have contacted us to find out how they can help, and have volunteered their precious time and effort for our call centres, relief missions and backend operations. We have decided in the first instance to focus our attention on the medical needs on the ground. One advance team and five medical teams have been and are being deployed to the affected communities to help with the medical services.

Aside from providing humanitarian services to the vulnerable, we have also increasingly focused our efforts on building a resilient society, through advocating first aid and blood donation. Recognising the importance of imparting life saving skills early to our children, we are working on launching the Junior First Aid and Young First Aid courses - both are specially designed to teach children aged 4 to 11 basic first aid. The course features easy-to-learn concepts, fun activities, and lively teaching materials to engage the kids in an interesting manner. We also had our first Psychological First Aid (PFA) training which was attended by SRC staff and volunteers.

Amid challenges such as the ageing population, we will continue to step up efforts in our mission of making blood donation a national priority and a shared social responsibility. Just last month, the Red Cross Youth initiated "A Relay to Save Lives" where 50 torchbearers ran a relay aimed at promoting blood donation amongst the youth. We hope that more pre-tertiary and tertiary institutions will come forward and support them in reaching their goal of 50 bloodmobile drives and 5,000 units of blood by the end of 2015. All these efforts are aimed at building individual, community and psychological resilience.

As we grow our humanitarian footprint in Singapore, we will be looking to further strengthening our local services such as FoodAid, TransportAid and Community Led Action for Resilience (CLARE), as well as ways to increase community resilience, one of the major priorities on our agenda for the coming year. We will be reporting on these at the upcoming Annual general Meeting on 29 June 2015.

Even as we keep ourselves busy with our work schedule, or school and studies or with our family life, I hope that each one of us can continue contributing towards the humanitarian mission of the Singapore Red Cross whether as a donor, member, volunteer or partner. Thank you for your support so far and I wish the best for each one of you!

BENJAMIN WILLIAM
Secretary General & CEO

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- Home Away from Home on Page 16
- Commemorating World Red Cross Day with the volunteers of Singapore Red Cross! on Pages 20, 21 and 22

Tribute to our founding father, Mr Lee Kuan Yew



National Disaster Response Team Training



Some 30 Singapore Red Cross volunteers attended the National Disaster Response Team Training held on 11 and 12 April 2015. Participants learned about disaster management through theoretical training as well as hands-on experience via a simulated exercise.

Psychological First Aid



The Singapore Red Cross held its inaugural Psychological First Aid (PFA) training for the pioneer batch of trainees which included staff and volunteers on 10 and 11 March 2015. With support from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support (PS Centre), 24 participants attended the training conducted by Master Trainer Ms Eliza Yee Lai Cheung, PhD, IFRC PS Centre Roster Member, Hong Kong Red Cross.

From 14 to 17 April, the participants who attended the first training went for a more detailed and in-depth session on Community-based Psychosocial Support.

Weekend Sales



On 26 April 2015, thrift shoppers bagged a bargain on everything from clothing and accessories to electronics and household items at the Weekend Sales held at Shop@REDCROSS, Jalan Khairuddin. All proceeds received would be channeled to Singapore Red Cross' local humanitarian services.

To all bargain hunters: Look out for upcoming fashion items donated from the Carousell Swap & Shop For Charity at Shop@REDCROSS - Red Cross House and Jalan Khairuddin, open every Wednesday and Friday (respectively)!

Blood Mobile Organiser (BMO) Seminar



Blood donation drive organisers converged on 22 April at the Health Sciences Authority (HSA) where they received the most recent updates on the current blood donation situation from Singapore Red Cross and HSA. The event also gave the like-minded groups the opportunity to share fun and innovative ideas on organising blood drives.



Choose LOVE, not FEAR

By Sarah Ang, Red Cross Youth
Photos by Tan Jian Jie and Elijah Xu, Red Cross Youth

Mark Twain once said, "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones that you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbour, catch the trade winds in your sail. Explore, dream, discover."

'Explore, dream and discover', did the new batch of Singapore Red Cross Youth Volunteer Instructors (Batch of 16/15), as they took a brave step in joining the Volunteer Instructors' Programme (VIP) last November. The VIP is an annual leadership camp which aims to equip graduating Red Cross cadets who aspire to become Volunteer Instructors (VIs) with the necessary skills and knowledge. VIs assume responsibility and leadership in planning many Red Cross Youth (RCY) activities and events.

Themed 'SPARKS', the programme was to allow trainees to better understand their strengths and weaknesses by taking on challenges in a safe environment, and through that, improve themselves to be better leaders. Throughout the Programme, the 16/15s were grouped into six different platoons named after stars - Sirius, Polaris, Altair, Antares, Rigel and Spica. In the past, stars were used as guides to chart unknown territories, and captains of ships often used stars as an assurance that they were on the right paths. Similarly, with each platoon named after a star, the trainees were hoped to become guiding stars and pillars of strength to their cadets.

This was the 12th year that RCY is organising the VIP. There were 42 VIs who graduated from Batch 16/15 and are serving the Society. With the review of past years' programmes and the alignment with the Ministry of Education's focus on a value-centred and holistic education, this year's programme featured several new leadership training frameworks, such as



the Simon Sinek Golden Circle, The Leadership Challenge Model by Kouzes and Posner among others.

Also, for the very first time, the trainees were taken to the outdoors during their 3 Days 2 Nights Training Camp at East Coast Park. The new and challenging environment provided them with an opportunity to exercise their judgement, integrating theoretical knowledge into real-life practical scenarios. The Programme also took a different approach by integrating VIP with Red Cross Youth Challenge 2014, where the trainee VIs learned the ropes from their seniors when they co-mentored the cadets. This acted as an excellent platform for them to learn more specific and relevant skills to effectively discharge their duties as VIs in the near future.

'Each and every one of us has evolved to be more responsible, more caring, more resilient and most importantly, a better VI. Our growth throughout these two and a half months is spectacular,' commented VIP 16/15 Spica Platoon Representative, Mr. Kelvin Zhou.

At their Passing Out Ceremony on 31 January 2015, the Guest-of-Honour Mr Sahari Ani, Director of Red Cross Youth, also affirmed that 'VIP was effective in fuelling the passion that these graduating trainees have for Red Cross Youth, and that parents and teacher officers have witnessed the wonderful growth of these youths into proud VIs in Red Cross Youth, driven by the mission of serving our community.'

The 16/15s went through an exciting and fresh VIP journey this year, one that stretched their potentials, one that bonded them closely together, and one that allowed them to climb their own Everest.

Join us at this year's VIP and make a difference!



Singapore Red Cross delivers final rebuilding project of Japan's 2011 Tsunami

Photo by Charis Chan, International Services

The Singapore Red Cross (SRC), together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and local Rikuzentakata City officials formally opened the Multi-Purpose Community Hall in Rikuzentakata City, Iwate Prefecture on 16 March 2015. The ceremony was officiated by Guest-of-Honour, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Law, Mr K. Shanmugam, and Mayor of Rikuzentakata, Mr Futoshi Toba. Also present at the ceremony was HE Chin Siat Yoon, Singapore's Ambassador to Japan, and Mr Benjamin William, Secretary General of SRC.

The community hall is one of the four major rebuilding projects undertaken with donations from the people of Singapore following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. It is also the final rebuilding project that SRC has delivered to the community, four years after the Tsunami struck Japan.

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Law, Mr K Shanmugam said in his speech at the opening ceremony, "Our sympathy and unity with Japan led to a tremendous outpouring of support and contribution to help the victims of the disaster. The donation drive supported by the government and launched by SRC raised over S\$35 million. This is either the largest or second largest amount ever contributed by Singaporeans for a disaster in a foreign city. We decided that our contribution should be channeled to projects that would benefit the local community."

The Rikuzentakata Multi-Purpose Community Hall, which is built on elevated grounds, houses a community hall, meeting rooms and exhibition spaces, amongst others. At S\$11.1 million, the 2,000 square-metre community hall in Rikuzentakata City is the single largest reconstruction projects of the SRC in Japan, and will serve more than 20,000 residents of the city.

"I still recall with a certain pride the overwhelming response from the people of Singapore when Singapore Red Cross launched the appeal. It was this show of solidarity and enduring friendship by the people of Singapore towards the affected communities, that made the reconstruction and other relief efforts possible. Three of the other rebuilding projects

have been completed and have been serving the community for some time now. It is always heartening to receive messages of appreciations from the people and the communities which these facilities are serving. Even though this is the final major project to be handed over, SRC continues to work with our local partners in Japan to see how we can enhance some of the completed projects, as well as, embark on additional projects to serve the affected community. These projects reflect the good people-to-people relations between Japan and Singapore, and help to further enhance these ties," said Mr Benjamin William, SRC Secretary General.

The community hall is also designed with the aim of enhancing Rikuzentakata City's disaster preparedness by integrating with the city's fire and police departments, and serving as a Disaster Relief Centre.

"The aid we received from people throughout Japan and around the world truly sustained us after the disaster. We lived in a city where we did not even have one piece of bread to hand out to our citizens. Our city has recovered and will continue to do so because of the aid we received, and for that I am truly grateful. To have this friendship with the people of Singapore, to have received this aid from your country is a sign of the best humankind has to offer, and for that as well I extend my thanks," said Mayor Toba.

In the aftermath of the earthquake, SRC launched an appeal to assist the victims of the disaster. A total of S\$35.7 million was received from the Singapore public – individuals, companies and organisations. This sum included the S\$500,000 seed money contributed by the Singapore Government.

SRC has funded the construction of other facilities in the affected Tohoku region. These include the Taro Support Centre in Miyako City that was completed in November 2011 and currently serves 1,700 residents monthly, the 90-student Shichigahama Toyama Nursery School that was officially opened in May 2013, as well as the Isobe Community Centre, that was up and running since July 2013.

First aid for everyone

By Clive Sin, Volunteer
Photos by V.Pratyaksha, Volunteer

Shades of white and red added a vivid contrast to the greyish tiles of Toa Payoh HDB Hub, as students donning their Red Cross Youth T-shirts scrambled to save their casualties. Ten minutes was all they had to prove they knew what to do in simulated emergency situations.

Held on 4 April, the finals of the annual National First Aid Competition (NFAC) saw more than 300 Red Cross Youth members participating in three categories.

This was the first time NFAC was held in the public, attracting a larger crowd. Themed “First Aid, Here We Go!”, the event aimed to raise public’s awareness on the importance and relevance of first aid in our daily life.

“As our country moves towards rapid ageing, skills such as first aid should be taken seriously BY EVERYONE – not just driven by organisations,” said Ms Denise Phua, Mayor of Central Singapore District and Guest-of-Honour at the event.

Echoing the mayor’s words, the competition challenged both primary and secondary school Red Cross Youth in the field of first aid. Secondary school cadets participated in the awareness category in which teams used their creativity to design an engaging first aid booth. They also took part in the management category where they were tasked to save three casualties in 10 minutes.

Primary school link members raced against time in a relay consisting of five stations that tested their basic first aid knowledge.

Ms Soomathy D/O Veeraya, teacher-in-charge of Red Cross Youth in Coral Primary School, said, “First aid is a life-long learning process. Whether it is a nosebleed or a cut, the kids can do it at home or in school. What’s even more heartening is how the kids spread the first aid message by teaching it to their friends.”

Students from Raffles Institution (Junior College) and various polytechnics also engaged in a disaster simulation exercise where they were placed under immense pressure to treat and evacuate multiple waves of casualties.

Ms Francine Wang, 18, team leader of the exercise said, “I was glad that there was great teamwork and we were able to work efficiently. This year’s National First Aid Competition is held at HDB Hub, which is good for members of the public to see what first aiders do in a disaster. With so much outreach, it is comforting to know that when there is a disaster, we will be well prepared.”



The winners of the National First Aid Competition are as follows:

Champions of the Link Management category:
Bukit Panjang Primary School

Champions of the Cadet Management category:
Northbrooks Secondary school

Champions of the Cadet Awareness category:
Raffles Institution



SRC volunteers helping out at the field hospital which provided essential medical aid to 200-300 patients in a day



SRC medical relief team providing critical medical treatment to the locals

Singapore Red Cross heightens relief efforts in Nepal

Photos by Ashley Chen, Volunteer

Singapore Red Cross (SRC) has stepped up relief efforts in quake-hit Nepal. The nation was struck by two major earthquakes in the last 3 weeks and SRC staff and volunteers have been on the ground since 28 April to provide medical and relief aid. To date, 10 staff and 23 volunteers have been deployed to Nepal.

Distribution of relief items in full swing

On Sunday 17 May, 300 kilograms of medical supplies donated by Gold Plus International and water filtration kits were shipped to Nepal. 500 water filtration kits, also known as Fieldrate Lites, will be distributed to the affected communities in collaboration with Singapore NGO, Relief.SG. Fieldrate Lite is a light and portable water filtration kit, capable of producing clean water within minutes without the addition of any chemicals.

SRC is also working with local partners like Nepal Red Cross to distribute other relief items. One of the priorities is to help the villagers with a more permanent shelter option. Working with a local Nepalese NGO, SRC is providing corrugated sheets and shelter kits to up to 800 families in Sindhupalchuk, one of the worst hit areas. With the monsoon coming, there is an urgent need for shelter for these families.

In addition, SRC is working with another local NGO to distribute nine truckloads of food packs to 1000 families in

the Dolakha, Ramechhap and Sindhupalchuk districts. Each pack consists of 30kg of rice, 5kg of Dhal and 1kg of salt. The distribution of the food relief packs commenced on 17 May.

These relief efforts are in addition to SRC’s initial disbursement of S\$200,000 worth of relief items (including food and non-food items) and emergency supplies.

SRC medical teams continue to provide care

Singapore Red Cross Medical Teams provided primary medical and emergency care in Bidur, Nuwakot, about 3-4 hours drive out of Kathmandu, at the field hospital established by Qatar Red Crescent. The SRC medical teams were in Nepal since 1 May 2015 and were seeing 200-300 patients a day. They continued operating till the end of May before handing over operations to local medical personnel. However, SRC will continue to assess the need for medical services before deciding if an extension of medical services is necessary. To date, five medical teams had been deployed.

Discussion on recovery projects underway

The SRC coordinating team based in Kathmandu has started discussions with Nepal Red Cross and other partners on possible projects for the recovery stage. This includes providing psycho-social support for the survivors of the earthquake and a back-to-school pack for the affected children.

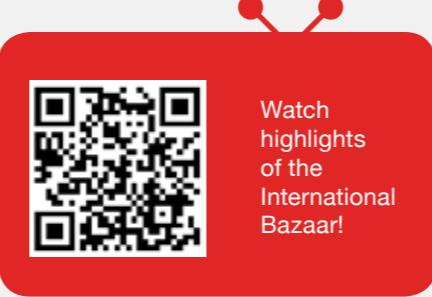
The public appeal launched on 28 April has collected S\$6.7 million to date.



Singapore Red Cross International Bazaar 2015

Photos by Teo Wei Keong, Volunteer

The Singapore Red Cross (SRC) held its signature biennial fundraiser on 15 March 2015 at Ngee Ann City Civic Plaza. Graced by President Dr Tony Tan Yam Keng, Patron of the SRC, the event raised funds for the Society's local humanitarian aid. This year, the bazaar showcased close to 80 stalls of international delicacies and crafts, games and performances put together by diplomatic missions, civic groups, schools and local and international enterprises.



Spot the difference

Circle the eight differences in these two photos and stand a chance to win the limited edition Singapore Red Cross bear* (five bears will be given away, first come first served among the correct answers)!



Name: _____ NRIC No: _____
 Contact No: _____ Email Address: _____
 Address: _____

I want to be notified of Singapore Red Cross' news via email (please circle): Yes/No
 To enter, email (picture of the answers circled) enquiry@redcross.sg with subject title "SRC Newsletter Spot the Difference"

*Terms and Conditions:

- Current Singapore Red Cross staff are not eligible to participate.
- Closing date for entry is midnight 30 June 2015.
- The winners will be notified by 3 July 2015, and the bear should be self collected by the 31 August 2015 from Red Cross House, 15 Penang Lane S(238486).
- Only one entry per person is permitted.
- Singapore Red Cross' decision is final in case of dispute.

Singapore Red Cross rallies youth and schools to organise 50 bloodmobile sessions this year



Photos by Sharon Foong, Nyan Minn Aung Henry, Youth Donor Club, and July De Leon, Human Resources

On 11 April 2015, the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) organised A Relay to Save Lives where 50 torchbearers ran a relay to promote blood donation amongst the youth. Their efforts hope to encourage all pre-tertiary and tertiary institutions in Singapore to organise 50 bloodmobile drives throughout 2015, targeting to collect 5,000 units of blood.

Red Cross Youth (RCY), the youth arm of SRC as well as the Youth Donor Club (YDC), a youth programme under the SRC' National Blood Donor Recruitment Programme collaborated on the event to raise awareness on the importance of voluntary blood donation amongst Singaporean youths, and to encourage them to take action and donate blood.

"Blood donation is the social responsibility of each and every one of us, so it is very heartening to see youths play their part in supporting this national cause. I commend all the youths who have channeled their passion and energy into organising and supporting this initiative. I'm confident that with their drive, we will be able to collect 5,000 units of blood from pre-tertiary and tertiary institutions this year," said Mr Benjamin William, Secretary General of SRC

The relay was kicked off at Bloodbank@HSA by ASEAN Para games athlete, 25-year-old Suhami Bin Sudar. The Singapore Cerebral Palsy Football Team defender, who together with his team most recently clinched a Silver Medal at the 7th ASEAN Para Games in 2014, is an active member of YDC, serving as a blood donor, donor recruiter and bloodmobile organiser.

Amongst the runners, was a delegation of SRC staff. The relay saw the torchbearers visit Red Cross House and Bloodbank@DhobyGhaut before culminating at Bloodbank@Woodlands where educational activities and exhibition booths were set up.



"The need for blood is ever-growing and I'm very proud of my peers today for rallying together to promote blood donation. Every unit of blood donated could save up to three lives; so if you're looking to truly make a difference, I urge you to adopt this meaningful cause."

Miss Goh Min Hui, 25 years old, President of Youth Donor Club.

"Regardless of who we are and what challenges we may face, I believe we all need to serve the community and give back. I got involved in YDC since 2008 because I cannot think of a more rewarding cause than saving lives. I hope more youths would step forward and make blood donation a part of their life."

Mr Suhami Bin Sudar, 25 years old, 14-time blood donor.



Project R.I.C.E+ 2015 Reaching out to those in need, with more than just rice



Visit any Sheng Siong Supermarket on 23 to 31 May and pledge your support to Project R.I.C.E.+ 2015. Donations can be made in multiples of \$10.



This pledge amount will be used to buy products such as food, beverages or household items chosen by the families themselves!



Your hampers will be delivered to the families by our volunteers with love on 27 June and 4 July.

Six years after it debuted in 2008, Project R.I.C.E has made a name for itself as an annual nation-wide rice collection initiative that touches the lives of underprivileged families. In the last two years alone, this youth-led initiative has collected more than 200,000 kg of rice and benefited about 50,000 beneficiaries, thanks to the firm dedication of the project teams and continuous support from sponsors, partners and donors.

Hoping to kick up a notch for Singapore's Golden Jubilee, the Project R.I.C.E+ 2015 team which consists of Red Cross Youth members from the Singapore Management University (SMU), National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Chapters and Volunteer Instructors, brainstormed and evaluated new ideas that could augment and amplify outreach as well as impact of the initiative.

Together, the team members conceived Project R.I.C.E+, an enhanced title to signify an enhanced approach. This year's project aims to reach out to beneficiaries with more than just rice. Beneficiaries will be given the choice to pick from a combination of items ranging from food, beverages to household items that is most suited to their needs.

If you wish to contribute to Project R.I.C.E+ 2015, you can do so by visiting any Sheng Siong Supermarket from 23 to 31 May. Donations can be made in multiples of \$10. We thank you in advance for your support!

Follow the Project R.I.C.E.+ 2015 facebook page!
<https://www.facebook.com/ProjectRICEplus>



Watch Project R.I.C.E+ video!



Safeguarding humanity in time of war A mooting experience

By Ada Chua, Singapore Red Cross youth member

Photos by Siti Humaira Binte Sumri, Singapore Red Cross Academy

Ada Chua Ai Le (Researcher), Siraj Shaik Aziz (Mooter) and Stella Chen Ming Hui (Mooter), law students from the Singapore Management University (SMU), represented Team Singapore at the 13th Red Cross International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Moot Competition. The competition took place from 12 to 14 March 2015 at the University of Hong Kong (HKU) and High Court Building, Hong Kong, where a total of 24 teams from 22 universities around the world battled their wits on the topic of International Humanitarian Law.

After six months of preparation and research, our team was ready to go for the 13th Red Cross International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Moot Competition. While our coach had prepared us and walked us through it, going there for the actual competition was different altogether.

On the first day, we participated in a role-playing competition. It was also the first time we had to work with our competitors. The segment was new and required us to work with our General Round opponents - the Japanese team. There were language barriers which were hard to overcome, but nevertheless it was an eye-opening experience to be able to meet and work with other teams. The role play took the first half of the day where we acted as members of the UN Peacekeeping Forces or the

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to negotiate issues. People took different approaches – some were cordial while others were adversarial, making it a fun adventure and an interesting learning experience.

After meeting the Japanese team in the first General Round, we were up against the Nepalese team in the second round, who were also worthy opponents. We managed to get into the quarter final round where we gave our best. Unfortunately, we did not make it to the next General Round although we managed to clinch second-runner up position for the role playing competition.

We are thankful for the support from our peers who voluntarily judged our practice rounds and gave us valuable feedback. We also learned a lot about IHL, and from the experience of working as a team and with people of different personalities and from different backgrounds. Personally, I will always remember the night that we stayed in school to finish our memorials and rushed to the post office to get it sent out. I enjoyed meeting and making friends with people from different countries, knowing more about their respective moot programmes and taking away valuable lessons that we could bring back to Singapore.



One Thousand Red Cross Youth Celebrate the Spirit of Humanity

By Sarah Ang, Red Cross Youth
Photos by Leonard Lim, Red Cross Youth



The annual World Red Cross Day Celebrations cum Enrolment and Recognition Ceremony was held on 18 April 2015 at Raffles Institution (Junior College), with the participation of close to 1000 Red Cross Youth (RCY) members.

On top of the usual RCY enrolment and graduation ceremonies, a fun-filled carnival in the theme of "Celebrating the Spirit of Humanity", was organised to commemorate this special day. There were funfair goodies such as popcorn, candy floss and kacang puteh, informative exhibition booths on Singapore Red Cross' (SRC) services as well as exciting activities and games like jenga, face painting, balloon sculpting and funky photo booths. A lively and entertaining mass dance segment was also put up by the RCY Volunteer Instructors, which won the hearts of the audience.

Addressing all enrolling and graduating RCY members, Mr Benjamin William, Secretary General of SRC said, "When you joined the Red Cross Youth, you have signed up for something more than just a CCA. As a RCY member, you have joined the ranks of a very special group of humanitarians going back more than 150 years."

"You are now part of a family - the Red Cross Movement - which is globally recognised as the premier humanitarian organisation

in the world. Whether in a conflict zone, or after a disaster, the Red Cross is always there, in the most challenging of circumstances to help the weak and the vulnerable," he added.

Other than formally enrolling new link, cadet and chapter members into the RCY family, certificates of appreciation were also presented to those who were graduating, for their contributions to their units and to the work of SRC. The Directors' Award, which is a prestigious award presented to the most exemplary member in a unit for displaying great leadership skills during their time of service to their unit, was also presented during the ceremonies.

"Your humanitarian journey continues. I assure you we will journey with you and you can be assured of a meaningful time ahead. Each one of you can make a positive difference in someone's life and be a beacon of light as you inspire your schoolmates, friends and family to serve the vulnerable and save lives," said Dr Mark Hon, SRC Council Member.

As the eventful day drew to a close, RCY links, cadets and chapter members held their heads high, with renewed inspiration and motivation as they marched together in solidarity towards furthering the humanitarian mission of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.





Call for more blood

By Joyce Teo (The Straits Times)

More and younger blood donors are needed as S'pore's population ages and faces a growing need for blood for medical procedures.

Singapore needs an increasing amount of donated blood to tend to an ageing population but the number of blood donors has fallen slightly in the last two years. In particular, efforts to grow the pool of youth donors here have yet to bear fruit, as the pool continued to shrink last year.

The Singapore Red Cross (SRC), which recruits donors to meet Singapore's blood needs, said it will continue to woo young donors to ensure that the pool of donors does not shrink. Some 68,868 donors stepped forward to donate blood last year, down from 70,824 donors in 2013, continuing the slight slide from 2012, according to the latest SRC data. Last year's donor number represented 1.78 per cent of Singapore's residential population, compared with 1.84 per cent in 2013 and 1.86 per cent in 2012.

SRC's plan was to raise the number of youth donors here to make up 35 per cent of the total pool by last year. But, instead of pushing higher, this group's numbers dropped, making up 30 per cent of the total donor pool last year, down from 31 per cent in 2013 and 32 per cent in 2012 and 2011. SRC secretary-general, Mr Benjamin William, said it could be due to factors such as insufficient knowledge about blood donation and a lack of opportunity to donate blood.

"It is always difficult to get people to take the first step. In the case of young people, we are competing with many other distractions that tug at their heartstrings," said Mr William.

"Organisations and individuals have more charity choices and good causes to support. In other words, blood donation may not be their choice charity or focus."

GROWING BLOOD NEEDS

Mr William said SRC needs to be vigilant and ensure that the blood donor pool does not shrink but grows in a sustainable fashion. The blood donor pool has to grow to at least 3 per cent of the residential population to ensure a consistent and sustainable blood supply for Singapore in the future, he said.

"We have projected that as the population grows (and ages), about 3 to 5 per cent more units of blood will be needed each year," he added.

This is why the SRC has set itself a higher whole blood collection target of 122,000 units for this year, up from the 108,058 units it collected last year. In 2013, it had managed to collect some 111,626 units. Most donated blood is used to treat people with serious illnesses such as cancer and blood diseases. Just 6 per cent of it goes to treat those involved in accidents and emergencies.

Whole blood can be separated into components such as red cells, platelets and plasma. They each have different purposes. Red cells, for instance, are used to treat anaemia and to replace blood lost in accidents or during surgery or childbirth. Platelets, which play a crucial role in ensuring blood can clot when needed, are used in chemotherapy treatments, bone marrow transplants or medical conditions such as dengue fever where there is massive bleeding.

As the population in Singapore ages, it is inevitable that a growing number of regular blood donors would no longer be able to donate due to health complications, he said. Yet, at the same time, more people will require medical procedures requiring blood transfusion, he added. The key in overcoming this major challenge lies in getting the young and healthy to come forward.

"To ensure sustainability, we aim to increase the pool of regular young blood donors and to encourage more people to start donating blood at a young age, especially while they are still in school," said Mr William.

WOOING THE YOUNG

"Young people have more years to contribute to the national blood programme. If one starts at the age of 16 years and donates two to three times a year, he/she would have become a champion blood donor at age 25 and made a difference in the lives of at least 50 patients," he added.

Champion donors are recognised by the Singapore Red Cross at each World Blood Donor Day. The smallest qualifying number is 25 donations, which is for a bronze award. To qualify for the most prestigious award, the Medal for Life, men need to have made at least 200 donations and women at least 150 donations.

Social work assistant and part-time student Oliver Ong, 25, is one of them. He first donated blood as a 17-year-old polytechnic student at a blood drive held at his school, and is now a champion donor. He now donates every 10 to 12 weeks. He said he ensures that he does not engage in physical activity for a day before giving blood and drinks lots of water and rests more.

The fear of pain is probably what keeps most people away from donating blood, though many of his women friends have been deferred due to low iron levels, he said.

Another regular donor, merchandiser Lee Jia Ying, 27, said some may stay away because of the misconceptions that donating blood is painful and harms the body.

There is actually minimal pain as Singapore started giving local anaesthetic injections for blood donations more than 30 years ago, said a spokesman for the Health Sciences Authority (HSA).

"While this is not a common practice in other countries, we have been doing so to make blood donation a painless experience for our donors," said the spokesman.

On SRC's part, Mr William said it is engaging more young people through various platforms such as events, social media, campus activations and youth-centric blood drives, and encouraging those who have donated blood to spread the word to their friends to become blood donors.

This year, different activities are planned. In support of SG50, the Red Cross Youth (RCY) has for the first time, set a target of 50 mobile blood donation sessions to be conducted in pre-tertiary and tertiary institutions throughout the year.

Previously, such mobile blood donation centres were "very much an individual initiative by the institutions themselves", said Mr William. SRC also has the Red Cross Connection mobile app and a microsite, which share information on upcoming blood drives and alert donors when their blood types are needed.

NOT EVERYONE CAN DONATE

However, there are some people who should not donate. Someone who has had an infection would have to wait a week from the time of recovery before he or she can donate

blood. These rules are enforced to ensure the blood is safe of pathogens, as well as to protect donors.

And the number of deferrals are not to be scoffed at. Every year, about 25 per cent of donors are deferred, said Dr Tan Hwee Huang, assistant group director (operations), Blood Services Group, HSA.

The most common reason for deferral is when donors do not meet the minimum haemoglobin level of 12.5g/dl, she said. As red cells are lost during blood donation, the minimum haemoglobin level is put in place to ensure that a person's haemoglobin level remains sufficient after a donation.

"A study we have done also showed that 35 per cent of donors with a haemoglobin level below 12.5g/dl had low iron levels in their blood," she said.

To increase their haemoglobin levels, potential donors can eat more iron-rich food, such as red meat, beans, dark green vegetables, iron-fortified cereals, raisins and prunes, two weeks before making a donation. Another group of donors who get deferred – they make up about one-fifth of deferrals – are those who have been to malaria endemic places such as Batam, Bintan, India and Cambodia, said Dr Tan.

"Donors can donate blood only at least four months after they have returned from such malaria endemic locations. The four-month deferral period allows us to accurately screen for malaria as our body takes at least four months to develop the antibody after exposure."

Other deferrals happen for a host of reasons, including if you are pregnant, have a heart condition, are taking antibiotics, or have engaged in casual sex. The full list of situations that preclude blood donation can be found on the HSA website. In some cases, the deferral can be permanent. For instance, people with an increased risk of developing HIV infection must not give blood, said Dr Tan.

Another permanent deferral is for people who are hepatitis B and C carriers. Those who had visited or lived in the United Kingdom between 1980 and 1996 for a cumulative period of three months or more are also permanently barred from donating to protect the blood supply from a fatal brain disease called variant Creutzfeld-Jacob Disease, the human form of mad cow disease.

MORE SATELLITE BLOOD BANKS

Blood donation is becoming increasingly convenient. Apart from the blood bank at the HSA building in Outram, there are satellite blood banks in Dhoby Ghaut (Bloodbank@Dhoby Ghaut) and in Woodlands (Bloodbank@Woodlands). The next satellite blood bank will be at Westgate Tower, adjacent to Jurong East MRT station, which will be ready in the middle of this year, said Mr William.

"The success of the blood programme may have bred a certain complacency that blood will always be available when needed," he said.

"We cannot take this happy situation for granted. We should never allow ourselves to get into a situation where there is a real shortage of blood."

Commemorating World Red Cross Day with the volunteers of Singapore Red Cross!



Starting his Red Cross journey as a cadet when he was in school, Alfian Aluyi has worn many hats from being the Red Cross Ensign for Singapore Youth Festival 2002 to taking up the chairmanship of International Friendship and the Arts Focus Committee. He is the recipient of the '15 years Long Service Award' at this year's RCY Awards and Promotion Ceremony.

What are some significant projects you have undertaken?

Every year in Red Cross was significant as I have served on many fronts. As the Assistant Director (International Friendship), I hosted delegations, planned ad-hoc overseas study visits, as well as regular events such as bilateral exchange programme. While our exchanges spread across many countries across the Asia Pacific region, we have the most number of regular exchanges with Malaysia and Japan.

Another significant instance was when I took up the Inventory Controller role with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the aftermath of the 2004 Asian Tsunami. The ICRC used Singapore as a logistics hub. I had to coordinate with Jurong Port and Paya Lebar Air Base to ship family survival packs, large tents, lavatory units and ICRC vehicles to Aceh. The most challenging was air delivery. The C-130 transport aircraft had specialised aircraft cargo pallets – front, middle and aft – each had different weight and size limits. We had to be very careful in the preparation phase, so that the aircraft would not have any problem taking off due to imbalanced cargo weight distribution.

What is your motivation behind the Red Cross commitment?

It goes without saying that I love the uniform. However beyond that, the school members, the volunteers whom I worked with, my seniors whom I have sought advice from time to time, and the many Red Cross Red Crescent friends whom I have met over the years are the sources of my motivation. When the going gets tough, I try to remind myself that I serve for

the advancement of youth development and to connect with many others beyond our shores.

Any interesting experience/encounter to share?

One interesting encounter was how we use "Chapters" in Singapore (the RCY tertiary school units are called Chapters). In the context of many other National Societies, the term Chapter is territorial, which refers to a city/region. For example, the Indonesian island of Batam is one of the many Chapters in the Indonesian Red Cross. This difference was highlighted when one of the Malaysian Red Crescent Johor Bahru Chapter officer asked us how many Chapters did Singapore have. One of my team members responded "10", which gave our Malaysian counterparts a misperception that SRC was organised into 10 territorial Chapters. Since then I took great effort to brief my Delegate Liaison Officers and Singapore Delegates on proper communication with counterparts from other National Societies, so as to avoid any misunderstanding.

World Red Cross Day message: If you met Henri Dunant in person, what was one thing you would like to ask him or learn from him?

I knew that Mr Henri Dunant faced stiff opposition in the ICRC and eventually became a bankrupt in pursuit of his humanitarian ideals. If I could travel back in time to meet him, I would like to thank him for holding on to his ideals despite the hardships he went through, because should he had not persevered, there would not be a Red Cross Movement today and I might have been a different person.



Debbie Chng, an active volunteer with SRC First Aider on Wheels (FAOW) programme, in which volunteer first aiders patrol East Coast Park on weekends and public holidays providing first aid on the go and responding to call-outs for help and tending to the injured.

Why did you join First Aider on Wheels (FAOW) programme?

My interest in learning first aid made me signed up for the courses at SRC. At the same time, I wanted to volunteer with the Society and went for the volunteer orientation programme.

This is where I got to know about the First Aider on Wheels programme and it instantly attracted me. I love the idea of cycling while lending a helping hand to others. It's just a perfect match!

How do you find time to volunteer?

In active months, I volunteer at least 16 hours per month on Saturdays afternoon and occasionally on Sundays afternoon.

I think that being passionate about something makes you find time to do it. I am working full-time and I try to work as efficiently as I can so that I will have time to volunteer. Moreover FAOW duties are typically over the weekends.

What are some cases you have attended to as a first aider on wheels?

Most of the cases I have attended to are minor abrasions. There were a couple of serious fractures cases where we had to call for the ambulance. During such cases, most casualties are panicking and at a loss of what to do. Other than immobilising the fractures, we must be confident in comforting the casualty, letting him/her know that they will be fine, and distracting them from the pain they are feeling.

World Red Cross Day special: What is one message that you would like to convey to all the volunteers around the world?

The act of volunteering is not for the benefits of others, as the ultimate recipient is yourself. Keep it up!



You also went on a disaster relief mission for Typhoon Haiyan, what are some memorable instances?

When I was in Philippines, I was touched by the resilience and humanity of those affected by the disaster. Despite the hardship that the disaster had inflicted (e.g. most of them lost their homes and livelihoods), the people stayed hopeful. There were signs all over Philippines that read "Bangon", which means to rise up.

I was also very inspired by the perseverance and dedication of the Philippine Red Cross staff and volunteers. There was a staff who continued working hard for weeks away from her family to assist in the relief efforts even though her home was destroyed during the hurricane.

World Red Cross Day Special: Based on the various Red Cross activities around the world, what is one movement/cause that you hope to front/promote/be involved in, if given the opportunity to?

International Humanitarian Law - Protecting humanitarian aid workers

At a young age of 23, Nicholas Boon is training other youth in disaster management while receiving training in Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation, as well as Community-based Psychosocial Support. Highly passionate in reaching out to and building resilience among vulnerable communities, he aspire to inspire youth to join him in meaningful disaster response missions.

Can you tell us more about the house visits you've gone for?

My beneficiary suffered from mobility impairment since he was a child. Being unsuitable for prosthetics, he has to rely on transport aid both outside and at home. He worked simple odd jobs for most of his life to fend for himself. Due to his failing health in recent years, he is currently living on financial aid. Despite the circumstances, he is a very cheerful man. Conversations with him would sometimes stretch for hours. I remember our first visit to his house to introduce ourselves (myself and another volunteer, Mr Zachary). We actually chatted and joked for a few hours like old friends!

How do you feel about this volunteering experience?

Despite our age difference, I have enjoyed every conversation I had with my beneficiary. I visited him only three



Not only is she a 10-time blood donor, Goh Min Hui is also the President of the Youth Donor Club.

Her ardor for blood donation started with curiosity of her uncle's purposeful habit.

What gets you started on this meaningful path?

When I was young, my maternal grandmother told me about my uncle who was an avid blood donor. That got me interested but I realised I had to be 16 to donate. The opportunity came in 2007 when I turned 17. SRC came to my school for a blood mobile and I did my first blood donation. I started to think that this is a very meaningful cause as it really helps to save lives. Recalling that my late paternal grandma required two bags of blood for transfusion, added on to my motivation to join this life saving mission. In the same year of my first blood donation, I joined the YDC training workshop & camp.

How do you think you can motivate more youth to join the cause you are championing?

I believe it's very important to first let them understand the importance of blood donation. I think that by depicting the different scenarios which blood is needed by patients and sharing personal story such as my late grandmother's transfusion with them, it will paint a clearer picture and lead to greater understanding.

or four times so far, but every session with him leaves a lasting impression on me. Although physically impaired, his optimism in life is something we all can learn from.

Learning of the plight of less fortunate individuals living amongst us in our own society had been an eye-opener for me. I learn that help does not necessarily have to be in the form of monetary aid. Companionship, for example, can also be a form of aid.

World Red Cross Day Special: Based on the various Red Cross activities around the world, what is one movement/cause that you hope to front/promote/be involved in, if given the opportunity to?

Given the chance, I would like to take part in Overseas Rescue Missions for disaster-stricken areas. I believe my experience and training in first aid would be useful, both for myself and for those in need.



A Red Cross Youth turned volunteer with SRC Community Led Action for RESilience (CLARE) programme, Nasruddin Bin Roslan finds meaning and life lessons through interactions with beneficiaries.

Psychological First Aid

By Ambrose Lee, Singapore Red Cross Academy

Events such as natural disasters, accidents, interpersonal violence, etc. could cause distress on individuals, families or even communities. People may be separated from family, lose their loved ones, witness violence, devastation, or feel traumatised by the situation. Some emotions include fear, detachment, overwhelmingness and confusion. However, some may have mild reactions while others may have more severe reactions¹.

Psychological First Aid (PFA) is a humane and supportive response to someone who is suffering and may need help. PFA may be provided to survivors, as much as it may be provided to first responders and disaster relief workers.

It is important for us to provide supportive communication to affected person. Some key values in Supportive Communication include

Respect - Listen and not make assumptions

Empathy - The ability to see and feel from the affected person's point of view

Genuine - Be true to oneself

Empower - The need to empower the affected person

Neutral - Be non-judgemental

Basic Elements of PFA

Active Listening - the key element

Stay Close - Being near is a sign of caring

Accept Feelings - Accept the affected person's interpretation of the event

Provide practical help and general care - This is also a way of showing care

Frequently-Asked Questions to help you understand PFA a bit better:

Will I become traumatised if I help people who have been in an accident or are distressed?

No, the majority of people don't become traumatised from helping others and are actually comforted they were able to help. If you feel upset after the experience, talk to people you trust. If you are worried about your health, see your family physician.

What if the survivor doesn't know or can't tell me what they want?

Offer to listen, and to contact others on their behalf. Be a calming influence and reassure the affected person that you can help.

What should I do if I think they're over-reacting?

Everyone has different needs and life experiences, and therefore they will react differently from how you would react. Should be in their position. Always try to show respect and listen to what they are saying.

Recognising signs of stress

Headache / Disturbed sleep / Fatigue

Feeling irritable / Bodily aches and pains

Decreased problem-solving capacity

Low energy levels / Increased use of substances, such as alcohol

What's On...

Linkamania 2015

Linkamania 2015 is an event where Singapore Red Cross Youth from primary and secondary schools, as well as tertiary institutions, come together to create a fun-filled and enjoyable day for our pioneer generation in appreciation of their contribution toward Singapore's nation-building efforts.

On 31 May, 150 youth will host 200 elderly residents in Tampines. They can look forward to:

- Health checks
- Youth performances
- Games & exhibition
- Goodie bags

Come and join us for a morning of fun! Learn more about Singapore Red Cross activities, participate in exciting games, and stand to win attractive prizes!

Date: 31 May 2015 (Sunday)

Time: 10.00am to 1.00pm

Venue: Tampines Central Street 82 (basketball court between blk 840 & 842)



TRANSPORT AID



Blood Donation Drives

7 June 2015 (Sunday)

09:00 – 15:00

Bloodmobile@ Chua Chu Kang Zone '9' RC & YEC
(formerly Yew Tee Zone 9 RC)

10:00 – 16:00

Bloodmobile@ Tampines Central CC



13 June 2015 (Saturday)

10:00 – 16:00

Bloodmobile@ Pasir Ris East Community Club

14 June 2015 (Sunday)

10:00 – 16:00

Bloodmobile@ Eunos CC

10:00 – 16:00

Bloodmobile@ Punggol 21 CC



21 June 2015 (Sunday)

09:00 – 15:00

Bloodmobile@Tampines East CC



28 June 2015 (Sunday)

09:00 – 14:00

Bloodmobile @ Rivervale CC

For full list of upcoming blood mobiles, visit:
www.donorweb.org/singapore-bloodmobiles

World Blood Donor Day 2015

World Blood Donor Day is a global event to honour and celebrate the commitment and contributions of dedicated blood donors. Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Health, will be the Guest-of-Honour for the first Champion Donor ceremony.
By invitation only

Date: 6 June 2015 (Saturday)

Venue: Singapore Discovery Centre

SRC 40th Annual General Meeting

All are welcome to the Annual General Meeting. Red Cross members will have voting rights. The event will be held on:

Date: 29 June 2015 (Monday)

Time: 5.30pm

Venue: 15 Penang Lane, Red Cross House,
Singapore 238486, Haw Par Hall (Level 2)



TRANSPORT AID



Save the Date!

Singapore Red Cross Flag Day 2015

Join us as a volunteer tin bearer to raise funds for our local humanitarian efforts! Just a few hours of your time is all we need! All proceeds will go to supporting Singapore Red Cross local services.

Date: 12 September 2015 (Saturday)

To find out more or register your interest, email us at
volunteer@redcross.sg

Need help or know of someone who does? Get in touch at the below locations or call 6664 0500.

RED CROSS HOME FOR THE DISABLED

8 Lengkok Bahru,
Family Link @ Lengkok Bahru,
#04-01 Singapore 159052

SHOP@REDCROSS THRIFT SHOPS

SHOP@RED CROSS
Red Cross Training Campsite
62 Jalan Khairuddin,
Singapore 457524

SHOP@RED CROSS
Red Cross House
15 Penang Lane,
Singapore 238486

BLOOD COLLECTION CENTRES

BLOODBANK@HSA
Health Sciences Authority
(opposite Outram Park MRT, Exit A and F)
11 Outram Road, Singapore 169078

BLOODBANK@DHOBY GHAUT
Dhoby Xchange
11 Orchard Road, #B1-05 to 09,
Singapore 238826

BLOODBANK@WOODLANDS
Woodlands Civic Centre
(opposite Causeway Point)
900 South Woodlands Drive, #05-07,
Singapore 730900

SINGAPORE RED CROSS ACADEMY @ RED CROSS HOUSE

15 Penang Lane, Level 3 (near Park Mall /
Dhoby Ghaut MRT, Exit B)
Singapore 238486

SINGAPORE RED CROSS ACADEMY @ ATRIUM

International Involvement Hub (I2Hub)
60A Orchard Road, Level 4M Tower 1
#04-02 (near Plaza Singapura,
Dhoby Ghaut MRT, Exit F)
Singapore 238890

Red Cross House

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