



SINGAPORE

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ISSUE TWO 2011

# RED CROSS

NEWS



# BLOOD DONATION: OUR WAY OF VOLUNTEERING

Medal for Life winners

# EDITORIAL

In our previous issue, we encouraged people to volunteer in different capacities with Singapore Red Cross (SRC) under the theme, 'Find the Volunteer Inside You'.

For this issue, our message is 'Volunteers Found'. Volunteers form the pillars of the Red Cross Movement. We would not have come this far, had it not been for our volunteers. We would like to salute all our volunteers for having contributed not only their time and skills but also influenced their friends and family to join us in our cause.

Along with this theme, we share how a volunteer helped to

reunite a family affected by the Japan earthquake and disaster. Also, we see how volunteers donated blood to save lives, advocated the importance of blood donation, organised blood drives within their organisations and helped out at the World Blood Donor Day celebrations.

In addition, we share stories of a volunteer, Aunty Helen, 77 who had volunteered with us since 2003 and a volunteer instructor's experience in Linkamania. Volunteers from Adult Volunteer Division and Red Cross Youth were recognised for their efforts in the Awards & Presentation ceremonies.

Going forward, we would like to call upon volunteers to join us for our SRC Flag Day 2011 on 7 September (Wednesday). As it is a week day, we encourage you to take leave to volunteer with us for a worthy cause! Bring your loved one, a friend or family along too!

Also, participate in our photo contest by submitting photos of volunteering in action or by voting for your favourite shot! Read more about these in the newsletter!

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*Singapore Red Cross News*

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# Red Alert: World Blood Donor Day 2011

By ANTHONY ANGELA, YASH SUNIT JOSHI,  
*Volunteers, Singapore Red Cross*

SHEENA CONCEICAO & SONDRRA FOO, *Corporate Communications*

Photographs MICHAEL MAH, YUHAN YUNUS, GOH SHAW CHONG & KARTINI SAAT

Some people are reluctant to donate blood because they fear the pain of the needles. Yet, there are many unsung heroes out there who have overcome their fear and have donated blood, all for a good cause. In an effort to salute the efforts of these blood donors for their gift of life, blood donors were recognised at the Red Cross World Blood Donor Day celebrations at the Singapore Science Centre on 11 June.

To these blood donors and volunteers, nothing means more to them than the common goal – More Blood. More Life. Blood donation offers a new lease of life to people involved in accidents and extends the lives of those with medical conditions. As the event marks its seventh year of celebrations in Singapore, blood donors and volunteers were in a sea of red shirts to reaffirm their commitment as blood donors.

The Blood Donor Recruitment Programme has achieved more than 110,000 blood donations in 2010, an increase of nearly



4,000 more blood donations from 2009. In line with the theme for this newsletter 'Volunteers Found', we share stories of volunteers contributing in different capacities to our Blood Donor Recruitment Programme. We want to say a big thank you to all of you who have helped in one way or another to inspire more to donate the gift of life – blood.

## Blood Donors Inspire Others

Medal for Life recipient, Mr Balakrishnan, 56, has donated blood for 36 years. He started out as a medical officer in his army days. He encouraged the spirit of donating blood as blood is necessary to sustain the life of a wounded soldier in times of war. "I want

to make it known to the public, especially the youth, that blood donation isn't a scary process. Donating blood is for a good cause that will benefit someone in dire need of help. Once they start at a young age, it continues on in their life, just like lighting one candle after another and filling a room with light," he asserted.

Some other examples of people who have lit one candle after another by donating blood through life, are Mr Rai Arun Kumar and Ms Monica Wong, 47 who have respectively been donating blood for 17 years and 27 years now. "I just feel happy after donating!" quipped Ms Wong.

One can also light one candle after another by inspiring one's family members and friends to donate blood.

That was exactly the case for Mr Lee, a blood donor and an usher at the event. His father, who had donated blood 47 times before he was diagnosed as a diabetic, was a source of inspiration for him. "My





Medal for Life winners

father wasn't able to achieve his goal of obtaining the Champion of Champions award. So I told myself if he can't get it, I'll get it for him," shared Mr Lee. Now, Mr Lee is close to achieving his goal. "To date, I have donated 149 times. Next year, I'll be receiving the award for 'Champion of Champions'," he added.

Just as his father had spread the legacy of donating blood to him, Mr Lee in turn hopes to pass on the tradition for his family to donate blood when his kids are older. He has involved his family as ushers at the event. "We make it a family affair and the kids are okay with it," Mrs Lee smiled. "I think donating blood is everybody's national duty," explained Mr Lee.

Like Mr Lee, Ms Min Hui, an undergraduate from UniSim has been spreading the blood donation message to youths at youth activities after embarking on her Red Cross journey when she was 17 through one of the Red Cross Youth camps. "Youth volunteers will spread the word and educate their friends," Ms Min Hui opined.



Awards	Units of Blood Donated	No of Award Recipients
Medal for Life	Males: 200, Females: 150	8
Champion of Champions	Males: 150, Females: 125	41
Silver Awards	Males: 50, Females: 35	437
Bronze Awards	Males: 25, Females: 25	766

In the same way, Ms Rina Tan, 37, who was inspired to donate blood after the terrorist attacks on 11 September in the US, also successfully persuaded her friends and her husband to donate blood. Her sense of responsibility outweighed her fear of needles. "I'm scared of needles. But I felt I had a responsibility to save lives, being a healthy person myself. It only takes 20 minutes!" she underscored.

Brothers Mr Jaikishin, 37 and Mr Rajesh, 34 were motivated to donate blood because they witnessed how important blood was for their anemic grandmother and father who had undergone a heart bypass. Currently Champion donors, the brothers usually compete and try to outdo each other to see who comes out as king in giving blood. Their father, Mr Raj feels exultant that both his boys did not need any nudging to get into the spirit of giving. "It came from deep within them to want to do something good," he said proudly.

### Organised Blood Mobile Drives

For Mr Raj, the gift of blood transformed his life so dramatically that he was inspired to organise blood drives on a large scale to drive more blood donations.

As a young boy, Mr Raj saw how his father struggled to find someone to donate blood for his mother, who was anemic. That inspired Mr Raj to donate blood from 1970. However, he had to stop blood donation in 1994 due to diabetes. In 2000, Mr Raj received blood when he was undergoing a heart bypass. Mr Raj was very grateful for being able to receive this precious gift of blood so easily compared to his mother.

Upon recovery, he was avidly involved in organising blood donation events to help spread awareness on the importance of blood donation at Tanjong Katong Neighbourhood Committee. Today, a healthier Mr Raj is now proud to call himself a blood mobile organiser and even ensures the





Mr Raj



Firdaus Abdullah

smooth running of the blood mobile event held quarterly at the Sinh Association of Singapore.

Like Mr Raj, retired teacher Mr John Chong, 65, has been organising many blood donation drives over the past decade. Mr Chong, a volunteer with us since 2002, has donated blood a mind-boggling 104 times so far. He has received the Gold Award for his donation. "It's easier to volunteer if you're already a donor, because you understand the blood donation process", he opined.

### Beneficiaries Spread Word

Just as how the gift of blood transformed the life of Mr Raj, the gift of blood also set a new direction in the lives of beneficiaries like Mr Firdaus Bin Mohd Abdullah. The 19 year old is a leukemia survivor and was at the celebrations as a volunteer Master-of-Ceremony. He was only 11 when he was diagnosed with leukemia. "Cancer really brought my body to a level where I

was really weak," Mr Firdaus shared.

Mr Firdaus was a blood recipient right before his

bone marrow transplant. "I felt so grateful that I was getting blood to help me out of my condition. It is one of the reasons why I give back to society," he acknowledged.

Mr Firdaus's journey with Red Cross started when his friend, Mr Zulaimen, another cancer survivor, asked if he would like to share how he fought his battle against cancer with the help of blood donors, to inspire and recruit more blood donors. Since then, Mr Firdaus and Mr Zulaiman have been leveraging their talent and have been hosting events for Red Cross as their way of giving back to the community. "I think this is a very noble cause. Giving blood is a very simple act. If every healthy person can do their part, there would be enough to save those in jeopardy," he affirmed.

### Volunteers Who Help Out

Volunteers who help out at blood drives or World Blood Donor Day are also important elements in the equation. "Volunteers'

contributions are ultimately given to a patient. They must constantly be motivated by the community," asserted Ms Elaine Tham, a volunteer.

### Taking Stock

According to a publication by the Health Sciences Authority (HSA), 15 units of blood are used every hour. Blood donors and volunteers have to persuade a competitive population to give time for this cause. Though it is going to be a rough ride ahead, we can overcome this challenge together by getting our friends and family to donate blood.

Every time someone makes a blood donation, spreads word on the importance of blood donation to the family and friends, organises blood drives or volunteers at a blood event, it brings renewed hope for the patients (who require blood to sustain their lives) to stand tall again. As the adage goes, When the world says "Give up", Hope whispers "Try it one more time." You too, can bring hope to the patients. Donate blood today.





# Not an Ordinary Reunion

Article and Photograph by SONDRÁ FOO, *Corporate Communications*

**W**hen the earthquake and tsunami struck the Tohoku region of Japan on 11 March, Ms Habibah Aman feared the worst for her 88 year old godfather, Mr Saburo Iwasaki who lived in Sendai, in Miyagi prefecture – one of the worst hit regions.

Ms Habibah tried to contact her godfather but the phone lines were down. She then called the Japanese Embassy which referred her to Singapore Red Cross (SRC). On 18 March, she called Singapore Red Cross (SRC) and provided the full name, address and phone number of her godfather.

## Restoring Family Links

After receiving Ms Habibah's phone call, volunteers and staff of SRC responsible for the Restoring Family Links (RFL) service commenced work immediately. One volunteer, Ms Midori Umezu, 33, a homemaker who moved to Singapore with her husband in November last year, joined the SRC after receiving a friend's email requesting for volunteers to help out with Red Cross' RFL service.

Ms Umezu worked with RFL staff member, Ms Fara Roslan and other volunteers to help Ms Habibah find her godfather. First, the SRC team notified the Japanese Red Cross and registered Mr Iwasaki as a missing person on the Family Links website of the International Committee of Red Cross.

Using the phone number provided by Ms Habibah, the team tried to call Mr Iwasaki but the phone lines were still down. "We called the phone companies like NTT and KDK, they told us the number given was correct but there was no registration of Mr Iwasaki and they could not reveal anything further," explained Ms Fara.

With the address provided, the team zoomed in on the location of the house via post-disaster satellite images of the region via Google Earth. What they saw was amazing! "Some houses were destroyed but Mr Iwasaki's house is still standing. However, we can see debris surrounding his house," said Ms Umezu.

The team found nothing on Mr Iwasaki from the online lists of refugees, evacuation centres, obituaries, Miyagi Town Council and Miyagi Police. Despite having no news

thus far, they remained undaunted. Leaving no stones unturned, the team checked on Mixi, the Japanese equivalent of Facebook to see if Mr Iwasaki used the Japanese social network. However, they found nothing.

Having nearly exhausted all resources in finding Mr Iwasaki, they realised their best to chance to find him would be through his daughter, Ms Keiko Iwasaki. However, even the name was spelt wrongly. Keiko is not a common name in Japan so the team tried several variations to the name.

Ms Habibah had earlier provided Ms Iwasaki's address based on their last correspondence 13 years ago. The team called several companies to locate the address. The team found there were no housing estates, only an industrial estate at the address mentioned. "The address given was incomplete and even the name of the town was incorrect," pointed out Ms Umezu.

Fortunately, their luck changed. Sendai Post office confirmed that Ms Iwasaki had lived at the old address. After checking with the delivery postmen, they were given Ms Iwasaki's new address. However, they could not give her phone number.



# on



From Left: Ms Fara Roslan, Mr Jon Mah, Mr Saburo Iwasaki, Ms Midori Umezu, Ms Habibah Aman,

When the team found a shop close to Ms Iwasaki's new address with its phone number listed, it boosted their morale as the finishing line was in sight. "On 8 April, we called the shop owner who confirmed that Ms Iwasaki is still living near the shop," shared Ms Umezu.

"We later managed to speak to Ms Iwasaki as she was called to the shop. Ms Iwasaki said her father was alive and well and was staying with her. Ms Iwasaki gave her new number and we passed the number to Ms Habibah. Finally, they managed to contact each other, it was a joyful reunion," explained Ms Fara.

Indeed, it was always heartwarming for the team to see people reunite with their families. The team has solved 26 out of 27 cases. Of the 26 cases solved, the reunion of Ms Habibah and Mr Iwasaki took the longest time to solve.

## Saburo Iwasaki's Unforgettable Experience

On 11 March, Mr Iwasaki, a widower was asked by his daughter to leave his house and get into her car quickly as the tsunami was approaching. His house was only 1 km

## Restoring Family Links (RFL) Service of Singapore Red Cross

SRC works closely with counterparts in other countries and the International Committee of the Red Cross to prevent separation, restore contact and clarify the fate of the missing due to armed conflicts or natural disasters. This RFL service sets Red Cross apart from other voluntary welfare organisations.

away from the coast. He got onto the car barefoot. There was no time to collect his valuables. Five minutes later, the tsunami hit the house.

Mr Iwasaki and his daughter quickly drove to an evacuation place, a Junior High School about 1km away from the tsunami. Just minutes later, they watched the tsunami pass. It was not a normal earthquake, the waves surged upward.

"As I stood at the fifth floor of the building, I could see a big, black, wall of waves making its way towards us. It was the first time in my life that I saw a wave so huge. It washed away everything in its path. Only the roof of the car can be seen," shared Mr Iwasaki in Japanese through an interpreter, Ms Umezu.

Mr Iwasaki and his daughter stayed overnight at the Junior High School till morning. The next morning, Mr Iwasaki returned home. All the surrounding buildings were

destroyed but his house was still standing. But everything was soaked in water so Mr Iwasaki had to stay at his daughter's house.

However, Ms Iwasaki's house was also damaged. The first storey had been affected, but the second was habitable. As Ms Iwasaki had a large family consisting of her son's family (wife and children), so it was difficult for Mr Iwasaki to continue staying in his daughter's house.

Just when it seemed that all hope was lost, Ms Habibah invited him to stay until he decides he wants to go home. "I am very grateful to Singapore Red Cross for tracking down Mr Iwasaki as he is such a kind man," said Ms Habibah.

Ms Habibah is convinced she would not have been reunited with her godfather on 8 April if it had not been for the tenacity and determination of the staff and volunteers at Singapore Red Cross.



# Hit us with your best shot!



**S**ingapore Red Cross (SRC) has launched a photo competition!

This photo competition is part of a year long publicity and awareness campaign by SRC to 'Find the Volunteer Inside You'. You can join this photo competition simply by sending us photos of volunteering in action to [thevolunteerinside@redcross.org.sg](mailto:thevolunteerinside@redcross.org.sg) by 12 noon on 1 November.

Get your friends and family to vote for you at <http://www.facebook.com/scredcross>. Spread the word and encourage your friends and family to submit their entries too! Winners stand to win prizes sponsored by a kind sponsor.

Subsequently, a mosaic of photos will then be collaged and exhibited during International Volunteers' Day in December.

The campaign 'Find the Volunteer Inside You', was initiated by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) this year as 2011 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers. The objective is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies as well as individuals.



## Do Your Part for Flag Day!

**I**n line with our theme to "Find the Volunteer Inside You", we hope that you can join us as a volunteer at the island-wide Singapore Red Cross (SRC) Flag Day 2011 on 7 September (Wednesday).

As it is a working day, Flag Day this year may be more challenging than previous years. We need to count on you, volunteers for your support. We hope you will take leave or time off on that day to help out. You can contribute in any way – by selling flags, counting money or taking photos.

We encourage you to bring your partner, spouse, parents, children, colleagues and / or schoolmates to volunteer for our Flag Day too! Hey, it is an opportunity for bonding too.

Everyone's efforts really do count. Each year, SRC's Flag Day offers the opportunity for you to support our local services. Donations go towards supporting the Red Cross Non-Emergency Ambulance Service, Red Cross Home for the Disabled, the Blood Donor Recruitment Programme, Red Cross Training Centre and subsidise first-aid and disaster management training programmes.

Call Ms Khairani Arahman at 6336 0269 or email to [khairani.arahman@redcross.org.sg](mailto:khairani.arahman@redcross.org.sg) to volunteer. Thank you! Your contribution will go a long way to touch the lives of those in need.





# Breaking the Ice

By ADELINE TAN, *Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross*

Photographs STEPHEN TAN & LEE GUO YING, *Volunteers, Singapore Red Cross*

It was a day of fun and games at Linkamania – a day camp held on 21 May at Eunos Primary School. The Links, primary school students of Red Cross Youth, gained a better insight into the life as a cadet of RCY if they continued with the co-curricular activity in their secondary education.

The camp, held annually, brought on the smiles for the Links as they made new friends and received magic wands some decorated with amusing ornaments from their mentors as souvenirs, in line with this year's theme of magic.

I was the mentor for Group One, Hermonie Granger. The group was rather quiet at the start but they quickly opened up through the mix of ice-breakers, station games and the campfire. By the end of the campfire, the group was so chatty that it was hard to capture their attention.

From this experience, I learnt that patience and prudence are important to guide and supervise the Links. We need to explain clearly and simply to facilitate their understanding. It was really a great satisfaction to see the links smiling and laughing during the games and when they were taking photos with their new-found friends.

It really warmed our hearts when the Links thanked us after the campfire and gave us rave reviews of the camp. "I learnt the importance of teamwork. The activities were also fun and helped develop my leadership qualities. I made new friends!" shared Tan Hui Min, one of the Links at the camp.

These made all our efforts worthwhile.



## Magical Moments

By ANNIE GAY, *Teacher of Red Cross Youth, Singapore Red Cross*



Magic is an art which never fails to fascinate. No matter how sceptical, one cannot quash that iota of 'wow' that escapes when a trick is performed. For teachers, magic is definitely an excellent icebreaker in any situation and it definitely impresses the students.

On 21 May, 23 teachers of Red Cross Youth joined the Magic Now! workshop organised by Youth Officers Your Opportunities at Eunos Primary School.

'Oohs' and 'aahs' filled the classroom as the instructor, professional magician Kyle Ravin, two times Grand Champion of Magic, performed a series of tricks with cards, balls and even money. After

each trick, the instructor revealed the secret and all the 'enlightened' teachers would eagerly try to perform the trick. Laughter inevitably erupted, when our butterfingers dropped the cards, or our flamboyant flair of 'tat tat' was more comical than sophisticated.

It was such a fun filled session – some of the tricks we learnt included pulling balls out of thin air, making coins appear and disappear, transforming S\$2 into S\$50. The last trick is admittedly a very useful trick anytime. Though it was enjoyable, it was fairly tiring. Fast eyes, nimble fingers, good coordination and agile mind were all required to make the magic work. Seeing is believing. However, I have to emphasise, the mind is indeed a very powerful tool – it's all an illusion...





# Battling it out in First Aid

By SHEA SHEN LE, *Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross*  
Photographs TEO WEI KEONG

**T**en schools in Singapore came together on March 19, to compete in the finals of the First Aid Competition, held at Fountain Square of City Square Mall.

"The First Aid Competition raises awareness of first aid among the youth and the public," said Ms Khairani Bte Abdul Rahman, the Secretariat of Red Cross Youth Division.

Against a backdrop of a lush green wall with climbing tropical ferns, the competition featured a mass casualty simulation scenario which was set within a local food court that had been struck by a catastrophe. Casualties seemed badly injured – some were unconscious, others looked dazed, some were moaning while others were hysterically screaming for help.

School teams took part in this emergency exercise. A panel of judges assessed each team on its evacuation, first aid skills and team work. On encountering mass casualties, each school team would instantly divide into smaller groups of three to four members each. Every group had to synchronise each team member's pace in evacuating the casualties and carrying them with or without stretchers to a flat platform, which was set up in advance adjacent to the emergency site.

Team members had to apply first aid on casualties based on their conditions. These included putting on disposable gloves, laying the casualties flat, covering them with blankets, checking their conditions, dressing their wounds, and performing CPR if needed. Judges observed and made notes on every first aid scene.

Contestant Oliver Lang, 15, from Admiralty Secondary School, was sitting around with his teammates watching the other teams competing, "I was at first staggered by the realistic scene, I was

not expecting it," he said. "I enjoyed myself today and learnt a lot through this competition."

At the venue, first aid information booths were set up by students from five schools near the main entrance of City Square Mall. Students manning the booths engaged fellow students and the public about first aid through games, videos, posters and leaflets. If participants answered correctly in the games, they received rewards like candies or trinkets.

At CHIJ Toa Payoh Secondary school's booth, participant Michael Ng, 15, was asked the question "why is gauze used instead of other materials to treat wounds?" Michael took the challenge and found the correct answer from some fact sheets on the booth panel. He was given a hand-made mini stretcher. "I learnt something today in this fun manner," said Michael.

"I am here today to help generate awareness of first aid and gain knowledge from it," said booth attendant, Lim Weiyi, 14, from Evergreen Secondary School.

"This is a good opportunity to bond with my team members. I have learnt how to motivate each other and overcome difficulties," said Lim's team mate, Fariza Juffri. "We were initially nervous but with encouragement, we felt more confident to present ourselves to the public."

The competition closed at 5pm and Ang Mo Kio Secondary School earned the grand title of the Overall Champion. The champion trophy in the First Aid Awareness category went to Raffles Institution; CHIJ Toa Payoh Secondary was the first runner-up. Hougang Secondary School won the Best Youth Officer Participation Award.



# Saluting The Achievements of the Youth

By VARUN MITTAL, Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross Photographs DERIC TAN Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross

**O**n 8 April at Hougang Secondary School, the Red Cross Youth Awards & Promotion Ceremony 2011 recognised and appreciated the efforts of Red Cross Youth (RCY) school units and members.

The event was made more meaningful as the Guest of Honour, Mr Jeffery Chan Wah Teck, Vice Chairman of the Singapore Red Cross used to be a Red Cross volunteer back in his hey days.

A beautiful dance performance "Touched By an Angel" put up by Volunteer Instructors of Red Cross Youth kicked off the event. This was followed by an insightful presentation on the RCY activities by Mr. Ling Khoon Chow, Director of the Red Cross Youth Division. It was interesting to learn that RCY had increased its membership to 2,870 cadets and 1,781 links with the notable inclusion of one more school in its fold. The number of units achieving EUA (Excellent Unit Award) has also increased by 25% from 24 to 30.

The presentation also highlighted the various events held in 2010. These included the RCY

Challenge which attracted members from 10 countries, Linkamania, an initiative to involve links more closely with RCY and Flag Day 2010 which raised a record S\$221,000 last year. Not only was RCY's presence felt in the local community, RCY also made a huge contribution to assist victims of Pakistan floods and Haiti earthquake in 2010..

Mr Ling also outlined the objectives for RCY in 2011. These included incorporating "Exploring Humanitarian Law" (EHL) as part of RCY. Other new initiatives were developing the Ace Star Programme as well as increasing the use and popularity of Uni channel blog and Facebook page.

The Strategic Review Development Committee (SRDC) formed in 2007 proposed a new program YOYO (Youth Officer-Your Opportunities) to encourage and motivate members of RCY and recommended a uniform review for RCY members. After SRDC completes its objective this year, it will be closed.

The Guest of Honour, Mr Jeffrey Chan then addressed a crowd of more than 300 people comprising youths, teachers, vice-

principals and other luminaries. He pointed out some challenges which RCY currently faces and expressed faith in RCY's ability to prove its mettle and resolve those issues. He acknowledged that RCY played an active role in garnering donations for the Japan disaster. He was pleased with the observation that RCY has been able to arrest the decline in RCY membership and the number now stands at 4,850 members with 250 active members. He expressed confidence that RCY will be able to increase and strengthen its membership in the coming years.

Bendeemer Secondary School and Hougang Secondary School were awarded the Sustained Achievement Award for consistently achieving the EUA Gold Award for five years. Singapore Chinese Girls' School also received the Sustained Achievement for 10 years. Once the schools received their awards, the gathering proceeded for dinner. The officers were then presented with their awards by the Guest of Honour. It was a memorable and pleasant evening for everyone.



Front Row, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> from left: Mrs Tan Sin Yen, Deputy Director, Red Cross Youth, Mr Ling Khoon Chow, Director, Red Cross Youth, Mr Tang Chun Tuck, Advisor, Red Cross Youth





# The A-Z of International Humanitarian Law

By ADELENE LEE, Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross  
Photographs ADELENE NG, VO THANH TAI, LEUNG WAI MUN

**H**ave you ever helped a stranger, knowing that in the attempt to save his life, you may also suffer the repercussions?

In this camp, I learnt about a shop owner in Bangkok who let a boy, who was being chased by a group of bullies, hide in his shop. He did this despite knowing the fact that these bullies who were his regular customers might take revenge on him. How many people in this world are as sympathetic and courageous as this shop owner, in helping a complete stranger and even endangering himself in the process?

During this camp, we were educated on humanitarian issues through various eye-opening modules, and the importance of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

The Exploring Humanitarian Law (EHL) Camp 2011 was an overnight event held for the first time from 28 to 29 May at CHIJ Secondary School (Toa Payoh). A total of 75 cadets from different school units,

focused on humanitarian issues such as war, child soldiers and humanitarian laws. The main objectives of this camp were to pilot EHL as a new Red Cross Youth (RCY) subject to be taught in schools and to expose cadets to EHL.

EHL introduces young people to the basic rules of the IHL. Through this camp, we learnt how IHL protects life and human dignity, reduces and prevents the suffering and destruction in armed conflict. Apart from exploring ethical and humanitarian issues arising from armed conflict, we were also encouraged to express our opinions and ask questions. This hones our communications and mental skills as we learnt to disagree respectfully, reason and think critically.

The highlight of this camp was the R.A.I.D Cross, held on the second day. We gained a better understanding of the dangers humanitarian workers face while bringing aid to those in need. Though they are protected under the IHL, there may still be snipers shooting at them, and soldiers who may be extremely reluctant to let them into the affected area. We could better understand what humanitarian workers go through while helping those in need.

In another game, we were given balls of different sizes. We had to figure out which balls to use to topple objects of varying sizes. We as participants realised that if a combatant were to use a big ball to hit a small target surrounded by 'civilians' they would end up hitting the 'civilians' unintentionally. Hence, the combatants should use the smaller sized balls. This illustrated the principle of proportionality that can be applied in real life.

In the last game, we were tasked to evacuate five casualties in 20 minutes. Although we did not manage to evacuate all of them, the activity underscored the significance of teamwork when giving humanitarian aid.

For the world to become a place full of humanity and sympathy for others, the younger generation needs to be educated on the importance of life, human dignity and humanitarian laws. This EHL Camp gave me a better insight on humanitarian issues and the extensive suffering and destruction caused by war. It was an interesting way to expose students to these international issues.







# Crossing the Hurdles to Victory

By MEAGHAN SEE, CHANG ZI QIAN, NG PEI YI

It was not an easy feat, yet they have performed beyond their wildest imagination. The joint moot team from Singapore comprising Ms Meaghan See and Mr Chang Zi Qian from Singapore Management University (SMU) and Ms Ng Pei Yi from National University of Singapore (NUS) clinched the top honours and savoured the taste of victory in the VI International Law Competition "Youth for Peace" 2011 organised by the International Institute of Labour and Social Relations (IILSR) from 17-21 May 2011.

This is a notable achievement as the team had set the precedence of being the first team from Singapore to win the competition. Held in Minsk, Belarus, the competition had a total 20 participating teams. Here is an extract of what the team recounted.

On the first day, after two lectures, we introduced Singapore through songs and dances in traditional cultural costumes. It was heartening to know that the crowd enjoyed our welcome speech as much as we enjoyed the entire process.

The morning of 18 May 2011 saw the official opening ceremony followed by the commencement of the first Theoretical Round. It was a role play in which our team was assigned the role of the legal advisers to a mock monarchy in a hypothetical conflict between Tron and Compland. The legal issues that emerged included the Right to Self Defence, the use of force and whether Compland's support of the Banners (the minority group residing in Tron) was a breach of the principle of non-intervention. On the midnight of 18 May, we carried out a reconnaissance mission around Ratomka in a treasure hunt game as there had been a Banners "invasion". We enjoyed ourselves tremendously.

Theoretical Rounds Two and Three, held on 19 May 2011, consisted of moot court rounds where we faced teams from Armenia, Russia and Belarus respectively. The Final Theoretical Round 4 that was held on 20 May 2011 as a tribunal hearing consisted of a hearing with five other teams from China, India, Russia, Belarus and Serbia. We advanced to the Final Round held at the International Institute of Labour and Social Relations on 20 May, along with the Symbiosis Law School from India. We emerged victorious.

It was humbling to be given the opportunity to moot against the world's top universities and before prestigious judges and professors. The friendships forged and memories created were priceless. The preparation since January 2011 had also brought professional and personal growth to the team members.

This competition has given the team a platform to examine, learn and appreciate the complexities of International Humanitarian Law. Given the tumultuous times we live in, it is timely and pertinent that students are exposed to IHL and its applicability.

The team is grateful to the Singapore Red Cross and her Secretary General of Singapore Red Cross, Mr Christopher Chua for the unwavering support.

Correspondingly, a joint-team from Singapore Management University (SMU) and National University of Singapore (NUS) made it to the semi-finals of the 9th Red Cross International Humanitarian Law Moot 2011 held in Hong Kong. The team comprised Mr Favian Kang and Mr Edmund Koh from SMU and Mr Kok Yee Keong from NUS and their team coach Ms Eunice Chua.





# Recognising Our Volunteers

By VICTORIA CHEUNG, Volunteer Development  
Photographs MARIEFE MERTO PALMER

**O**n 18 June, 50 volunteers from the Adult Volunteers Division (AVD) were recognised for their contributions at the AVD Awards & Promotion Ceremony. Of these, 44 volunteers were promoted and six volunteers were awarded the Long Service Award.

On top of that, two volunteers – Ms Goh Seow Huang and Mr Tan Ah Kow – received the Outstanding Volunteer Service Awards in recognition of their outstanding volunteer efforts.

Ms Goh Seow Huang joined the Singapore Red Cross Volunteer Aid Detachment on 7 Feb 1988 as a member of Detachment 3. Through the years, she was promoted to the ranks of Corporal, Sergeant and to her current rank of Assistant Divisional Officer. She has clocked more than 6,000 volunteer hours and that is still counting.

Mr Tan Ah Kow joined the Singapore Red Cross Volunteer Aid Detachment in 1961 as a member of Detachment 3. For his voluntary work, he has been awarded the 5 Years Long Service Award and is currently holding the rank of Senior Unit Officer.



## SRC's Annual General Meeting

By SONDRA FOO, Corporate Communications  
Photograph KARTINI SAAT

**A**chievements of the past year and plans for the future were highlighted at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Singapore Red Cross on 23 June, attended by more than 100 volunteers.

Some of the notable achievements of 2010 included:

- Project R.I.C.E raised a total of 100,000 kg of rice in aid of 20,000 beneficiaries.
- The Blood Donor Recruitment Programme achieved more than 99,000 blood donations in 2010, an increase of 3.8% from 2009.
- The Red Cross Training Centre trained and certified more than 7,000 individuals

and active volunteers in various first aid courses.

- Our adult volunteers provided first aid coverage at more than 100 national and community events.
- Corporate Communications generated substantial media value of an average of one mention everyday across various mediums.
- Human Resources embarked on an extensive human resource re-engineering programme.
- The final projects funded by the \$S89 million Tidal Waves Asia Fund were successfully completed with the handover of the Meulaboh General Hospital and the handover of the Sri-Lanka Singapore Friendship College. In all,

68 rehabilitation and reconstruction projects in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Maldives were successfully wrapped up. The Singapore Red Cross with the support of all the participating agencies produced a book titled "Beyond Tsunami – Rebuilding Communities Touching Lives".

Notable quote by Chairman: "Going forward, we will strengthen our core competencies. We will innovate, improve our services and embark on quality community projects. We will continually tighten our internal processes for monetary and in-kind donations to safeguard public contributions to ensure that they are channeled appropriately to meet the needs of the most vulnerable."





# The Tale of New Hope

By SONDR A FOO, *Corporate Communications*  
Photographs KARTINI SAAT

**T**he Red Cross Home for the Disabled at Family Link @ Lengkok Bahru opened amidst much jubilation and fanfare on 6 July.

It was a momentous occasion as three important people who helmed the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) were present at the event – Mr Tee Tua Ba, present Chairman of SRC, Lt. Gen (Retd) Winston Choo, Chairman of SRC from 1996 to 2008 and the Guest of Honour for the evening, Chairman Emeritus Dr Rasanayagam, Chairman of SRC from 1973 to 1978.

Chairman Emeritus Dr Rasanayagam or Dr Rasa, as we fondly know him, has been instrumental in the historical development of the Home for the past 59 years, when it started as the Red Cross Home for the Crippled Children in July 1952. Dr Rasa shared an interesting anecdote of why the

Home changed its name from Red Cross Home for the Crippled Children to the Red Cross Home for Physically Disabled Children.

Mr Tee highlighted that a Day Activity Centre (DAC) has been developed at the Home and has accepted its first case in June. The DAC develops the cognitive, social and motor skills of residents while providing respite for caregivers during working hours.

A touching video of the Home was later shown. It depicted how volunteers and staff touched the lives of the residents. Many eyes glistened with tears towards the end of the video when one resident sang the Chinese song “月亮代表我的心”.

Performances by volunteers and staff alike injected vibrancy to the event. This was followed by a tour of the Home and a buffet dinner.

**Red Cross Home for the Disabled**  
8 Lengkok Bahru, #04-01, Family Link @  
Lengkok Bahru, Singapore 159052

**Levels Occupied** 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> floors

**Contact Number** 65 6762 1029

**Visiting Hours** 10am to 6pm daily  
For first time visitors, please call the  
home so a tour can be arranged at  
the premises.

**Fast Facts** Residency of 94 as of 6 July  
with the capacity to boost residency  
to 100 adults and 30 children.



# MUSIC BRINGS HOPE FOR JAPAN!

Singapore Red Cross would like to extend our appreciation to all companies and organisations that brought hope to Japan through their donations and fundraisers.

#### **'Touch of Gold' EP Album**

Konen Creative has raised more than S\$16,000 through the sale of the EP album "Touch of Gold" where veteran Xin Yao singers lent their voices. The CD was sold through Popular Bookshop's CD RAMA.

#### **'You Are Not Alone' Concert**

Youths of SG Street Fest had more than 200 talented performers raising more than S\$140,000 at Far East Plaza Atrium on 16 April.

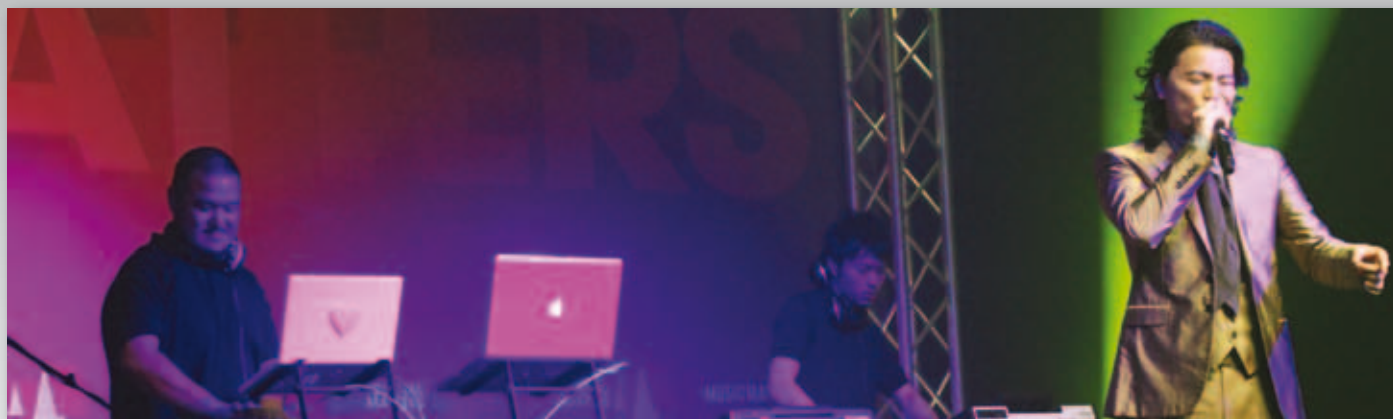
#### **Music Matters LIVE with HP**

Organised by Branded Ltd, the live international music festival held on 26 to 28 May helped to raise funds.

#### **'Sing for Japan Concert'**

Young talents and local celebrities performed at the concert organised by Kids Performing to raise funds for the survivors of the Japan disaster through the sale of the concert DVD, souvenir program and concert tickets.





# Learning the Ropes

By NASEEM JAN FAZLAY RAHMAN, *International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*  
Photographs KARTINI SAAT & WONG LEONG JEAM

I attended the 11<sup>th</sup> Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) Induction Training course at Singapore Red Cross' Training Camp. The participants of the 11-day course were from the Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies of Southeast Asia and the IFRC Zone office.

Among the lessons learnt during the training were:

- The usage of radio, International radio alphabet coding and GPS system in International security
- Handling of media interviews on field missions;
- International Disaster Response Law
- Organisational development
- Finance, shelter, water and sanitation and logistics



- Disaster Management & its Administration - preparing for deployment, setting priorities, understanding field situations in order to respond effectively during a disaster.

Besides learning about disaster management, the training provided interaction opportunities for participants. Hopefully, this will enhance communication and

teamwork amongst participants in the future, especially during a disaster.

The highlight of the training was the cultural presentations by representatives from each country on the last night. This was aimed at understanding the nuances and sensitivities of the different countries in the Asia Pacific region to enhance participants' ability to empathise with the disaster victims and their next-of-kin, thereby handling the situation effectively.

Coming from an administration background, I felt that the RDRT induction training complemented my understanding of the disaster management work of RCRC. I am ready to be deployed in the field in the event of a disaster.







# Walking in Her Shoes

By SONDRA FOO, *Corporate Communications*

Photograph KARTINI SAAT

**M**s Helen Soh, 77, has gone through operations with 32 stitches and metal bars lodged within both her legs. But that did not deter her from taking the public transport to volunteer with Singapore Red Cross (SRC).

A grandmother of a seven-year old girl and an eight year old boy, Helen has the youthful energy and vivacity that belies her age.

On a typical day, Helen wakes up at 5am to do her household chores. Notwithstanding her age, she is very committed to exercise every morning – she swims three times every week at her condo and walks once or twice every week at Bishan Park. She also goes for Yoga classes on Saturday mornings. After that, she either comes to SRC to volunteer or if it's a Tuesday, she will go marketing. Usually, she takes bus 162 to get to Red Cross House. At nights, she will watch the Asian channel or Channel 5 or Channel 8. She turns in by 11.30pm every night.

## As an SRC Volunteer

The former marathon runner and avid mountain climber started volunteering with SRC in 2003 after she retired from her job at Robinsons.

In the early days of volunteering with SRC, Helen fondly recounted singing and performing together with other volunteers for the residents of the Red Cross Home for the Disabled. This was back in those days when the home was still situated at Elizabeth Drive. She also helped to tend the garden at the Home then.

Another unforgettable memory was of her selling tickets at Expo for a fun fair. "At the event, I even shook hands with Mrs Nathan.

Mrs Nathan was pleasantly surprised that I was volunteering despite my age," she reminisced.

Helen had also participated in Flag Day 2009. "We came to Red Cross that morning, collected a donation tin and asked for donations outside Boon Lay MRT station. I was very touched by the generosity of young children, many of whom were telling their parents, 'Mama, I want to donate.' After that, we assembled back at Red Cross at 4pm with our tins," she said.

In 2010, Helen sold survivor kits to raise funds in aid of SRC's local humanitarian services at the Formula 1 SingTel Singapore Grand Prix. She was there for 2-3 days from noon to 9pm. "Though the staff and fellow volunteers asked me to take a rest, I preferred to walk around. I always kept myself busy," added Helen.

In the aftermath of the Japan earthquake and tsunami that occurred in March this year, Helen helped out at the donation centre of SRC to raise funds for the survivors of the Japan disaster.

Apart from these volunteering efforts, Helen also actively donated blood till she reached 60.

Helen has been encouraging her grandchildren to volunteer as well. "I hope to bring my grandchildren to Red Cross during their school holidays," she shared.

Helen enjoys volunteering as it gives her the opportunity to touch the lives of others while getting to know more people. "I am very happy volunteering because Red Cross helps people. As long as you find me useful and as long as I can do it, I will come," she said.





# SRC Spearheads Recovery Projects in Japan

Photograph EDWIN KHOO

## +SRC and The Movement



**I**n a joint press conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 4 August, the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) announced the launch of S\$34.38 million worth of recovery projects in the Tohoku region. This provides further aid to survivors of the earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan on 11 March 2011.

Appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 15 March 2011 as the lead agency to coordinate Singapore's relief efforts to Japan, the Singapore Red Cross has to date received S\$34.5 million in response to its public appeal to assist survivors. This includes S\$500,000 from the Singapore Government.

The planned projects include:

### 1. Construction of S\$11 million multi-purpose hall cum evacuation centre in Rikuzentakata City, Iwate Prefecture

To be completed by 2013, the building will be used by local residents for various community-related activities. It will also have sufficient storage facilities for emergency supplies and equipment as well as a roof helipad.

### 2. Construction of S\$1.05 million temporary care centre in Miyako City, Iwate Prefecture

Under a Memorandum of Cooperation signed by the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Mr Akihiro Ohata, Singapore Ambassador to Japan Mr Tan Chin Tiong and Governor of Iwate Prefecture Mr Takuya Tasso in July 2011, SRC is funding the construction of S\$1.05 million temporary care centre in Miyako City, Iwate Prefecture. To be completed by end 2011, the facility

will serve approximately 1,000 evacuees currently living in a temporary housing development.

### 3. Purchase of medical beds and vehicles

### 4. Purchase of household items for transitional houses

### 5. Reconstruction of temporary hospital, repairs of nursing school worth S\$8.9 million, of which S\$5 million was collected by Japanese Association in Singapore

- a) S\$3.9 million for some 250 medical beds and 60 vehicles for different health establishments at the municipal level.
- b) S\$1 million for essential household items for displaced people moving into transitional houses built by the Japanese Government.
- c) S\$4 million for the reconstruction of a temporary hospital, repairs and refurbishment of a nursing school and other reconstruction projects.

### 6. Donated 10 mini-cars to Cities in Iwate Prefecture

Together with Life Community Development (LCD), SRC donated 10 mini-cars worth S\$210,000 to Rikuzentakata, Kamaishi, Tono, Yamada and Otsuchi cities in Iwate Prefecture to transport elderly patients from evacuation shelters to medical facilities for treatment.

### 7. Other reconstruction projects in Miyagi Prefecture worth approximately S\$10 million

SRC is also in discussions with the Miyagi Prefecture Government on possible

reconstruction projects in the affected areas.

Mr Tee and SRC's Director Operations & Head International Services Mr Lim Theam Poh were in Japan from 18 to 23 July 2011 to finalise plans on the above-mentioned projects. They were accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the visit, Mr Tee met Iwate Prefecture Governor Takuya Tasso, Miyagi Prefecture Vice-Governor Shuichi Miura, and various Japanese prefecture officials. They also visited the site of the SRC-funded project in Miyako City.

The Singapore Red Cross will continue to work with MFA and the relevant Japanese authorities to identify more projects which could be funded from the remainder of the donations.

Japanese officials repeatedly expressed their appreciation for Singapore's earlier contributions and interest to support them in the reconstruction of the affected coastal cities. In particular, Iwate Prefecture Governor Tasso told Mr Tee that SRC's donation of the temporary care centre in Miyako city was a tangible donation which the Miyako city residents would appreciate.

Close to S\$1.5 million had been disbursed as emergency relief, providing basic necessities to Japanese families placed in temporary housing in the immediate aftermath of the disasters.



# What's On



September

## 10 World First Aid Day

Learn more about first aid and disaster management at our exhibition booth at a Humanitarian Forum & Fair organised by Caritas Humanitarian Aid Relief Initiatives, Singapore (CHARIS) at Catholic Junior College! Register at [www.charis-singapore.org/hff](http://www.charis-singapore.org/hff)

## 7 SRC Flag Day 2011

We are looking for volunteers to join us for Flag Day. Register with Khairani Arahman at [Khairani.arahman@redcross.org.sg](mailto:Khairani.arahman@redcross.org.sg) or call 6336 0269. If you can't join us, please donate generously when you see us on the streets. Proceeds go towards our local humanitarian services.

## 11 Shop@RedCross Bazaar

Check out new and used apparels, accessories, bags, shoes, toys, books, CDs, digital cameras and household appliances at bargain prices at 62 Jalan Khairuddin from 10.30am to 3.30pm! Sale proceeds will go towards our local humanitarian services.



## 23-25 Formula 1 SingTel Singapore Grand Prix

Get involved in the action by selling survivor kits to raise funds for our local humanitarian services! Register with Victoria Cheung at [Victoria.cheung@redcross.org.sg](mailto:Victoria.cheung@redcross.org.sg)



SINGAPORE