

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit presided over the Annual General Meeting of the Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch

Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu presided over the Annual General Meeting of the Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch at IRCS TNB Premises, Red Cross Building, Egmore, Chennai today (01.11.2019) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "I am happy to be here on the occasion of the Annual General Meeting of the Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch.

As you are all aware, the Red Cross was born in 1859, when Henry Dunant, a young Swiss gentleman, came upon the scene of a bloody battle in Solferino, Italy where 40,000 men lay dead or dying on the battlefield without medical attention.

The mission of the Red Cross since then has be to inspire, encourage and initiate at all times; all forms of humanitarian activities that are aimed at minimizing human suffering thus helping to create a more congenial atmosphere for the prevalence of peace and harmony.

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) was established in 1920 through an enactment of Parliament. Today, after nearly a 100 years the Indian Red Cross Society has unit offices in 35 States and Union Territories and more than 700 District and sub-branches.

The Hon'ble President of India is the President of the Society at the National Level and the Governors are the Presidents at the State level with the District Collector being the President at the District level.

The activities of the Indian Red Cross Society are carried out under the banner of its seven Fundamental Principles, viz., Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality.

I am aware that the Tamil Nadu Branch has been undertaking various activities, such as,

- a) Running Day Care Hospitals
- b) Disaster Management & Relief activities
- c) Providing Artificial Limbs to the differently abled persons.
- d) Physiotherapy treatment.

- e) Running a Family Counseling Centre.
- f) Operating Creche Units
- g) Providing Training in Nursing aide
- h) Organising Blood Donation camps
- l) Health Care Centres for Women & Children

About a hundred Blood Donation Camps are organised every year and about 7500 units of blood collected and distributed to hospitals.

It is heartening to know that the State head quarters branch is now planning to run health clinics in Perumbakkam, Venbakkam, Karuneelam, Seethapuram and Padappai Villages in Kacheepuram District and Aranvayalkuppam, Eraiyur, Pennalurpettai and Selai Villages of Tiruvallur District. A Mobile Medical Unit with a Medical Officer with Para Medical staff will be visiting the above said villages for providing treatment. The medicines prescribed by the doctors will be given to the patients free of cost.

An Emergency Call Centre is being set up in the IRCS Blood Bank at Egmore so that needy persons can directly avail of its services all round the clock.

An Ambulance Service will be introduced in collaboration with Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) for the benefit of the residents in and around Tambaram.

Old Age Home visits by Physiotherapists from the Red Cross for providing Geriatric Training to Senior Citizens are also proposed.

All this points to a trajectory of growth for the future. Today we are commencing the centenary celebrations of the Tamil Nadu Red Cross. On this memorable occasion, I wish to exhort the State unit

- To establish Blood Banks in three or four other locations in the State
- Conduct Multi-Specialty Medical Camp in villages so as to benefit the people in the rural areas.
- Distribute Mobility Aids / Hearing Aids to the disabled persons in larger numbers.
and
- Adopt Villages for Rain Water Harvesting and help in preserving Water bodies.

At this point let me emphasise that it is important for the State unit and the District Branches, and Sub Branches to conduct meetings regularly, and review their activities diligently so that transparency and accountability are ensured. The Tamil Nadu unit of the Red Cross Society should be committed to the highest standards of honesty,

transparency and accountability. Social service has always been a part of our way of thinking.

The message of the Red Cross is to place service above self. This thought actually lies at the core of India's psyche.

Ancient Tamil classics have particularly eulogized the lives of great kings who have considered the welfare of their subjects as more important than their comforts. We are all aware of the legendary greatness of King Pari who provided his chariot to a creeper plant that needed support to spread out and grow. The munificence and generosity of kings like Karna are legendary and find place in our epics.

A complete life is experienced when an individual goes beyond the intellectual and analytical level to the feeling of oneness and compassion which can spring only from the altruistic heart. Let us hope and take the pledge this year that we will expand our heart with altruism, fellow-feeling, kindness, and uphold service above self.

At today's function, 20 district branches and sub-branches of Red Cross Society have been honoured with special awards in recognition of their exemplary services in activities such as

- Membership Enrollment
- Organising Blood Donation Camps
- Organising First Aid Training

I congratulate the awardees and wish them well. Inspired by the achievements of these 20 district branches and sub-branches, I wish that many more should follow in their footsteps and win laurels for themselves and the state.

I am sure that the Annual General Meeting will be a turning point for ensuring faster and better progress in the activities of the Red Cross in Tamil Nadu. It is my wish and desire that the deliberations of today's meeting should be carefully documented and further action pursued so as to lead to logical conclusions. I extend my best wishes and greetings to all the members of the Red Cross family in the State and hope that they will multiply their activities several fold. May success visit them in all their noble endeavours.

On this occasion, Thiru. R. Rajagopal, I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary to Governor, Dr. Harish L. Metha, Chairman, Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch, Thiru. R.M. Balasubramaniam, Vice Chairman, Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch, Thiru. M.S.M. Nasruddin, General Secretary, Indian Red

Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch, Dr. C.Indernath, Treasurer, Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch, Thiru. S. Prabakaran, Auditor and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai – 22

Date : 01.11.2019

Sd/-

Joint Director (PR)