

BANGLADESH CYCLONE DISASTER - RELIEF

A third informal meeting of concerned individuals and organizations of Bangalore was held in the context of a 'Bangalore response' to the above disaster.

Date : 19th May 1991
Time : 10.30 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.
Venue : Ashirvad, 30, St. Mark's Road, Bangalore - 560 001.
List of
Participants : (Refer Appendix)

This meeting was primarily an orientation programme on Disaster Relief focussing on preparation of the first team that were expected to leave by the end of the week (25.05.1991).

The meeting started with a minute silence for the victims of the Bangladesh Cyclone Disaster followed by a short introduction by Dr. Ravi Narayan of Community Health Cell about the plan/framework of the meeting.

Dr. P.N. Pandit (Ex Professor of Surgery - St. John's Medical College and M.S. Ramaiah Medical College), presented a very graphic and informative report about the experiences of the first team from St. John's Medical College who responded to the Andhra Cyclone Disaster in 1978. He covered all aspects of their experiences and outlined some basic steps for the planning and organization of such relief work. The slide presentation was very effective and a good learning experience for all those who were present.

Dr. Ravi Narayan, Coordinator of Community Health Cell, supplemented the above presentation with lessons from experience of the St. John's team that responded to the Bangladesh crisis and refugee camps in July 1971.

Mr. Sam Joseph of Action Aid, who had just returned from Bangladesh presented a short resume of the situation there including some useful tips to the volunteers to adapt to the local culture and situation.

Dr. Thelma Narayan of Community Health Cell presented a short review of the newspaper reports (till 17.05.91) about the present disaster highlighting various aspects of the continuing tragedy.

2. The first relief team headed by Dr. Shirdi Prasad Tekur (Community Health Cell) consisting of Dr. Sanjiv Lewin (St. John's Medical College), Dr. Anne Rego (Emmaus Swiss Hospital, Palmaner), Mr. A. Anand Kumar (Community Health Cell), Ms. Beatrice (Service Civil International), Mr. S.J. Chander (St. Martha's Hospital) and Ms. Mohini N.E. Ajagarni (St. Martha's Hospital) left on 25th May, 1991.



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APPENDIX

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Miss. Dominique Legrie, Ms. Krpa, Mr. Prabhu Deva, Mr. Ramachandran, Mr. M. Mohamed Usman, Ms. Valli Seshan, Mr. Antony Das, Ms. Shobha Ravi, Ms. Maria Shyamala, Mr. R. Shantha Kumar of Service Civil International, Bangalore.

Dr. Kenneth D'Cruz, Mr. M. Ravindran, Mr. Pratap Patrick Paikaray, Ms. Anne Rego, Mr. Liesl Pais, Mr. Sanjiv Lewin, Mr. Vikram Prabhu, of St. John's Medical College, Bangalore.

Mr. S.J. Chander, Mr. Lawrence, Ms. Joji Xavier, Sr. Clement, Dr. Begum Rawosf, Sr. Mercy Abraham and Sr. Elise Moothelom of St. Martha's Hospital, Bangalore.

Dr. Shirdi Prasad Tekur, Dr. Ravi Narayan, Dr. Thelma Narayan, Mr. S. John Clarence, Mr. A. Anand Kumar, Mr. V.N. Nagaraja Rao and Mr. M. Kumar of Community Health Cell, Bangalore.

Fr. Claude D'Souza, Sr. Rose, Sr. Rojamani and Sr. Begina Mary of Ashirvad, Bangalore.

Dr. Mohan Isaac of NIMHANS-Bangalore, Dr. P.N. Pandit & Ms. Namrata Pandit, Dr. Sam Joseph of Action Aid-Bangalore, Fr. Leonard of Father's of Holy Cross-Bangalore, Mrs. Jean Rego and Mr. R. Murugan.

Ms. Valli Seshan of Service Civil International presented the salient feature about the current plans of SCI to support the first team of relief workers from Bangalore.

Dr. Mohan K. Isaac, Associate Professor of National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, presented an overview on handling of the psycho-social/mental health aspects during disaster relief work. He drew lessons from the Bhopal Gas Tragedy and the Venus Circus Fire Tragedy.

This was followed by a question answer session by participants. Various questions about the current disaster in the context of being volunteers were raised.

Certain other issues were brought out by Dr. Thelma Narayan based on her experience of Andhra Cyclone Relief Work in 1978 and Krpa of Service Civil International based on her visit to Bangladesh in recent years.

It was decided that all potential volunteers should be in touch with the following people so that their participation in future teams could be coordinated as requests/support from organizations came in.

Ms. Krpa - Service Civil International (Tel. No. 359583)

Mr. Kumar - Community Health Cell (Tel. No. 531518)

Fr. Claude D'Souza - Ashirvad (Tel. No. 210154)

Sr. Mercy - St. Martha's Hospital - School of Nursing (for volunteers from St. Martha's Hospital) (Tel. No. 215081)

& Dr. Kenneth D'Cruz - St. John's Medical College (for volunteers from St. John's) (Tel. No. 530724 - Dept. of Surgery)

The meeting was concluded by thanks to all the organizations and individuals who had participated in it.

It was followed by a meeting of the first team at which Dr. Shirdi Prasad Tekur of Community Health Cell and Mr. Chandru of Service Civil International clarified various issues and formalities to be completed before the team leaves for Dacca via Calcutta by the end of the week.

FOLLOW-UP

1. The first advance party consisting of Ms. Valli Seshan of Service Civil International and Mr. Kabir Jaithirtha left as an advance team to Bangladesh on Tuesday 21st May, 1991.