

A minute of an informal meeting of concerned individuals and organisations of Bangalore, interested in Facilitating the sending of a relief team to Bangladesh.

Date: 14th May 1991

Time: 1.30pm - 2.30 pm

Venue: Principals Office, St. John's Medical College, Bangalore.

Members Present

1. Dr. Alfred Mascarenhas, Principal, St. John's Medical College
2. Ms. Valli Seshan, Service Civil International
3. Dr. Gerry Pais, Oxfam, South India
4. Mr. Rami Mohan, Action Aid
5. Dr. Shirdi Prasad Tekur, Community Health Cell
6. Dr. Thelma Narayan, Community Health Cell
7. Dr. Ravi Narayan, Community Health Cell
8. Ms. Krupa, Service Civil International
9. Mr. S.J. Chander, Community Health Dept, St. Marthas Hospital
10. Dr. Sanjeev Lewin, Postgraduate, Dept of Paediatrics, SJMCH
11. Dr. Gegory Joseph, P.G. Dept of Anaesthesiology, SJMCH
12. Mr. Anand Kumar, Community Health Cell.

This meeting was a second in a ^{ies}series of informal meetings exploring the possibility of a Bangalore response to the Bangladesh cyclone and its aftermath. Various members shared the information they had about all aspects of facilitating team from Bangalore for relief work and the following key decisions were made.

1. A First team consisting of about 10 volunteers would begin preliminary arrangements to leave for Bangladesh via Calcutta around 22nd of May or soonafter.

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2. This team will be fully supported by Service Civil International, who have liaised with their Bangladesh counterpart and have received the okay for the sending of the first team, SCI locally will help with all the arrangements/contacts for visa, travel and related requirements. Ms Valli Seshan of SCI will go, may be a few days in advance to coordinate the arrangements both in Calcutta and Dacca.
3. Dr. Shirdi Prasad Tekur of Community Health Cell will lead the medical contingent which will consist of Dr. Sanjeev Lewin and Dr. Gregory Joseph (St. John's) Dr Anne Rego (Emmaus ^{WISS} ~~WISS~~ Hospital, Polonner) Mr. S.J. Chander (St. Marthas Hospital). A sister tutor from St. Marthas may also join.
4. Apart from this Mr. Ram Mohan (Action Aid) and two or three more volunteers already in touch with SCI Office will join the team.
4. An orientation programme for the team will be organised at Ashirvad, ~~Office~~, St. Marks Road, on Sunday 19th May from 10 to 1.00 pm. The Action Aid office behind Hotel Gautum (Museum Road) will be an alternative venue if Ashirvad is not available. Though the focus of the orientation will be on the team that is leaving next week, all potential volunteers and individuals from collaborating institutions who are keen to participate will be invited to join in.
5. Dr. Alfred Mascarenhas suggested that St. John's Medical College would be interested to facilitate Medical teams from the college on a more long term commitment till the end of the year. This could be included in the programme for PGs as well. However the College would need much more information about the situation and the support available to such teams on a long term base. Each team

could consist of volunteer doctors/nurses/others for a month each time.

6. Dr. Shirdi Prasad Was requested to make a thorough assessment of the situation and send review/report that would help decisions regarding sending of future teams. The first team would work with SCI Bangladesh. Future teams would respond to ~~any~~ other requests if they come up.

Dr. Ravi Narayan mentioned that Fr. Coutinho of Ashirvad was leaving on 15th May for Bangladesh on behalf of Austrian Contas to assess the situation and plan for relief as well. In a few days time a request from him may also come.

7. Dr. Thelma mentioned that the first few teams will be able to carry out medical relief, only if many supplementary activities like ensuring accessibility to the people (roads etc) and clearance of carcasses and dead bodies etc was undertaken. Therefore much of the initial work would not be medical only. Mr Ram Mohan also endorsed this issue. It was decided that Medical teams must see themselves as part of a total relief/development effort.
8. Apart from St. John's Medical College, it was suggested that St. Marthas Hospital may be a good source for Medical teams as ^{as nurses} well, especially from the nursing college. All further requests from SCI, Caritas and others would be directed to these institutions.
9. Dr. Alfred Suggested that Dr. Kenneth Decruz of Dept of Surgery St. John's Medical College Hospital would liase on behalf of the College with all the organisations participating in this. joint action as well as with the volunteer doctors of St. John's (There were over 18 on the list as of 14th May!)

10. Ms. Valli Seshan mentioned that it was heartening to see the enthusiastic response from St. John's which gave other groups enthusiasm to proceed with facilitating relief work
11. Dr. Gerry Pais of Oxfam was requested to get in touch with Oxfam, (Bangladesh and Calcutta) since the former had maintained a massive response already and would be in a good position to give information about the ~~na2~~ needs, the situation and the types of further response required.
12. While travel/visa arrangements would proceed immediately for the members of the first team, all other present agreed to follow up ^{other forms of preparatory} action and report at the orientation meeting on Sunday 19th May.

Contact Numbers

1. Valli Seshan - 642025 (Res)
2. SCI - 359583
- Shirdi Prasad Tekur - 620740 (Res)
4. Community Health Cell 531518
5. Dr. Thelma Narayan - 533064
6. Dr. Alfred Mascarenhas - 530737 (Res)
(STM) 530724 (Off)
7. Dr. C.M. Francis 212427 (Off)
(STM) 212527 (Res)