

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT WORLD RED CROSS DAY ORGANISED BY INDIAN RED
CROSS SOCIETY, TAMIL NADU BRANCH AT RED CROSS BUILDING,
EGMORE, CHENNAI ON 09.05.2019 AT 10.00 A.M**

Anaivarukkum Kaalai Vanakkam

Thiru. S.G. Prabhakaran,
Vice President,
Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch

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

**Distinguished Invitees
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a privilege for me to be addressing all of you at this commemoration of the World Red Cross Day, organised by the Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch.

On this day we pay tributes to Henri Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross Movement and to the millions of volunteers who have followed in his footsteps, to provide dedicated Medicare services to the diseased and the suffering.

Jean Henry Dunant, the Father of the Red Cross Movement was born in May 1828 in Geneva. During the battle of Solferino in 1859 between the French and Austrian armies nearly 40000 soldiers who were wounded were abandoned to their fate and lay unattended in

suffering and pain. Dunant was horrified at the plight of these soldiers and moved to tears by what he witnessed. He started relief operations to help the wounded soldiers taking the help of people in neighbouring villages. The incident left a deep impression on his mind and he wrote a book titled “A memory of Solferino” in 1862. The vivid and touching description of the battle field in the book led the rulers of the various kingdoms in Europe to convene the first Geneva Conference. All this resulted in the founding of the Red Cross with the flag of a Red Cross against a white background.

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

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) was established in 1920 through an enactment of the legislature. Today, the Indian Red Cross Society has 35 State and Union Territories branches with more than 700 District and sub-branches. The Hon’ble President of India is the President of the Society at National Level. The Governor is the President of the Indian Red Cross at the State level and at the District level the District Collector is the President.

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.

The Tamil Nadu Branch of Indian Red Cross Society has been undertaking various activities, such as,

- Running a Day Care Hospital and Urban Family Welfare Units to cater to the needs of destitute and economically backward people
- Operating a “State of the Art” Blood Bank with all modern facilities

- Offering Training Courses in Nursing to the women from economically and socially backward families, free of cost
- Running an Artificial Limb Centre and Physiotherapy and Fitness Centre for Differently abled persons.
- Running 15 Crèches in various parts of Tamil Nadu to take care of children in the age group of 1 – 5
and
- Training of Volunteers to provide relief in times of natural calamities.

The Society is also running a Free Hearse Services Project on behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu throughout the State and also provides free transportation to newly delivered mothers and their babies from Government Hospitals to their residences under the Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram, Project of the Government of India.

A free medical camp has been launched today with the support of specialists in General medicine, ENT, Opthomology, Gynaecology, Pediatrics, Ortho, Dermatology, Endocrinology and Diabetics for the benefit of the under privileged people. I am happy to see that the Red Cross Society has given wide publicity for the camp through the internet and newspapers. Thousands of pamphlets have also been distributed. About a thousand beneficiaries from various parts of the city are expected for the camp and for them, free transport and refreshment facilities have also been arranged.

The mission before us is to make health care comprehensive, universal, affordable and qualitatively professional. For achieving this objective, the road requires the combined efforts of all stake holders. Care, concern and consideration for the diseased and the suffering is the need of the hour. Let as all resolve on this special day to work together in this noble effort.

Inspired souls such as Henri Dunant, have shown as the way, by their deep concern for the welfare of humanity and the world recognizes such noble initiatives. The father of the Red Cross Henri Dunant was decorated with the Noble prize in 1901.

The famous French philosopher Voltaire once said and I quote, “Those who are occupied in the restoration of health to others, by the joint exertion of skill and humanity, are above all the great of the earth. They even partake of divinity, since to preserve and renew is almost as noble as to create.”

The Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch which was formed on 27th November 1920 has rendered 99 years of yeoman service in the state. The land and building for the state head quarters was donated by philanthropists such as Eugene F. Geotrex, the Swedish Red Cross Society, the Rajamannar Trust and many other institutions and individuals at various periods. It is thanks to these benevolent measures, that we are seeing the Tamil Nadu branch of the Indian Red Cross in comfortable conditions of financial health. It is important that these assets are put to gainful use for the benefit of the organisation. Service in the Red Cross is service to humanity and involves a huge level of commitment, sincerity, devotion to duty and above all compassion for the weak, the destitute and the suffering. Organisations such as the Red Cross are meant to uplift humanity by the display of virtues that are beyond the capability of ordinary mortals. On this special occasion of the Red Cross Day, I consider it my duty to exhort all those who form part of the Red Cross to contribute to their highest levels of ability with the greatest zeal and to the fullest extent. Only then will these organisations fully realise the goals for which they have been set up. I thank all of you for having given me the opportunity to address all of you on the occasion of the World Red Cross Day. I conclude by expressing

my appreciation and best wishes to the doctors who have come forward to serve voluntarily at the medical camp. My greetings and a special word of thanks are reserved for the organisers of the function. May they be greeted with success in all their endeavours.

Nandri Vanakkam....

Jai Hind....