

**DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RELIEF ASSISTANCE
INSTITUTE**

In Manila a seminar organized by the Philippine National Red Cross in co-operation with the League of Red Cross Societies was held from 7 to 16 May 1972. The League was represented by Mr. R. M. Pierpont, Under Secretary-General and Head of Relief Section; Mr. K. J. Seevaratnam, Regional Officer for Asia; and Mr. Sven Lampell. Delegates from the National Societies of the following countries took part: Australia, Ceylon, Great Britain, Indonesia, Japan, the Khmer Republic, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and the United States. One of the highlights of this Institute was the participation for the first time in a Red Cross regional meeting of Governmental and non-Governmental Agencies.

The general theme of the Institute was *Disaster Preparedness for National Safety*. The programme included subjects such as "Co-ordination with Government and Relief Agencies", "Rehabilitation of Disaster Victims", "Adequate Preparedness for Weather Forecasting and Disaster Warning", "Statistical Prediction of Disasters", which threw new light on possibilities for extended Red Cross action and held the interest of all participants. The keynote address on *The Role of the Red Cross in Disasters* was made by the Under Secretary-General of the League. The ICRC also took part in this study week, and Mr. B. Daniel, delegate, delivered an address on *Relief to victims of international and non-international armed conflicts*.

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IN THE RED CROSS WORLD

The other subjects presented and discussed were: basic principles of the Red Cross in disaster relief; pre-disaster planning and survey of needs; relief action in floods, typhoons, fires and earthquakes; medical and nursing services in disaster relief actions; disaster relief actions with special emphasis on epidemics, communications, transportation and warehousing; team approach in disaster relief including manpower training; international and local assistance and relief to victims of armed international and non-international conflicts.

It is rewarding to note that this Institute succeeded in emphasizing the fact that the Red Cross movement throughout the world is profoundly concerned, as one of its vital responsibilities, in maintaining the safety of its people through disaster preparedness as a measure, specially in disaster-prone countries. Also, the importance of maximising co-operation in the region in working out effective disaster preparedness programmes by sharing available knowledge and experience in this field was one of the points that was brought home.

On ongoing programmes, disaster preparedness and relief assistance excepted, the activities of National Societies in the fields of health, social welfare, and youth, have followed traditional patterns. However, during the period under review there has been an attempt at re-appraisal and evaluation for purposes of more integrated planning within the overall national plans.
