



new delhi (regional)

The regional delegation in New Delhi opened in 1982. It works through the armed forces, universities, civil society and the media in the region to promote broader understanding and implementation of IHL and to encourage respect for humanitarian rules and principles. The ICRC visits people arrested and detained in connection with the situation in Jammu and Kashmir (India), as well as in Bhutan and the Maldives. It also supports the development of the National Societies in Bangladesh and India and supports some of their assistance programmes in the field.

COVERING
Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	3,188
Assistance	1,284
Prevention	2,426
Cooperation with National Societies	1,729
General	-

► **8,628**

of which: Overheads 527

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	92%
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PERSONNEL

28	expatriates
83	national staff (daily workers not included)

KEY POINTS

In 2007, the ICRC:

- ▶ conducted visits to detainees in Bhutan, India and the Maldives and helped them stay in touch with their families
- ▶ supported a seminar on health in detention organized by the Indian Medical Association
- ▶ increased knowledge of IHL among students and authorities in the region through the organization of two moot court competitions and the 10th and 11th South Asian Teaching Sessions on IHL
- ▶ maintained support to the Bone and Joint Hospital in Srinagar and a physical rehabilitation centre in Jammu, in conjunction with the Indian Red Cross Society
- ▶ supported the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society's tracing activities following cyclone Sidr

CONTEXT

Violent bomb attacks occurred in many areas of India. In February, 64 people were killed in explosions on a train bound for Lahore, Pakistan. Worshippers and protesters were killed in a bomb attack and its aftermath in Hyderabad. Tensions continued to simmer in India's north-eastern states, fuelled by friction between ethnic or tribal groups and related movements seeking autonomy or independence, as well as in areas where Naxalite armed groups were present.

The governments of India and Pakistan pursued their dialogue on Kashmir, where low-level violence flared up.

In Bangladesh, the caretaker government was dismissed amid increasing tension in January. A state of emergency was declared and remained in force under the second interim government, with support from the armed forces. General elections were postponed. Some 100,000 people were arrested in a drive to eradicate corruption and crime, and members of banned Islamist groups were also detained. After street violence in August, a curfew was imposed in major cities. Mass evictions of slum dwellers took place. The situation was calmer towards the end of the year as voter registration began. cyclone Sidr hit Bangladesh in November, with devastating effects as the country was still recovering from severe flooding.

In Bhutan, mock elections took place to test the readiness of the population and of the country's institutions responsible for ensuring a smooth transition to democracy.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

	Total		Total	Women	Children
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)¹		WOUNDED AND SICK²			
Detainees visited	1,213	<i>Physical rehabilitation</i>			
Detainees visited and monitored individually	1,213	Patients receiving services	809	207	51
	<i>of whom females</i>	Prostheses delivered	139	31	7
	22	Orthoses delivered	34	8	10
	<i>of whom minors</i>				
Number of visits carried out	49				
Number of places of detention visited	26				
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS					
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>					
RCMs collected	252				
RCMs distributed	289				
DOCUMENTS ISSUED					
People to whom travel documents were issued	442				

1. Bhutan, India and the Maldives

2. India

ICRC ACTION

Visits to detainees held in connection with the situation in Jammu and Kashmir remained the primary focus of the regional delegation in New Delhi. While visits were blocked for a few months, activities for detainees continued, including family-links programmes and release checks on former detainees. The ICRC's director of operations continued high-level discussions on detention issues in June during the follow-up visit to the one he made in 2006. A seminar on health in detention took place in April, organized by the Indian Medical Association with the support of the ICRC and the World Medical Association. Prison doctors from all over India attended.

The ICRC developed its cooperation with the Indian Red Cross Society and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, including on programmes to restore family links. Its support to the tracing programme in Bangladesh proved to be crucial after cyclone Sidr struck in November, affecting some 6 million people. The ICRC carried out a survey of the Bangladeshi Red Crescent's water projects in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in order to provide technical advice on the projects' implementation. It also conducted a comprehensive review of the National Society's emblem campaign. In India, support was maintained to physical rehabilitation programmes in Jammu and Srinagar.

The ICRC maintained contact with the authorities in Bhutan and the Maldives and visited security detainees in both countries.

The regional delegation kept up a variety of activities to promote IHL among government officials, armed and security forces, and universities throughout the region. These included organizing IHL events and activities at national and regional level, making presentations or running sessions on IHL during events organized by others, and sponsoring the participation of leaders, students and teachers in IHL events abroad. The ICRC supported instruction in IHL and international human rights law for the military and police in India.

CIVILIANS

Refugees and stateless persons who did not have passports or other forms of identification were issued with ICRC travel documents, at the request of the embassies concerned and in coordination with UNHCR, enabling them to travel to countries granting them asylum or resettlement.

- ▶ in India, 17 RCMs collected from and 193 RCMs distributed to civilians
- ▶ 442 people issued with an ICRC travel document

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

India

Owing to procedural and personnel changes, the ICRC was unable to visit detainees in Jammu and Kashmir during a period of a few months, after which the visits resumed. Detainees were able to exchange news with their families via RCMs and received visits from relatives living far away, who had their travel costs covered by the ICRC. Release checks were carried out on former detainees, with special attention paid to their health. To help foreign detainees, contacts with the relevant embassies were developed, and in one case, these efforts led to the release and repatriation of a Lebanese national. The findings of ICRC visits relating to living conditions and the treatment of detainees were shared with the detaining authorities through meetings and confidential working papers. The findings were also the focus of the dialogue between the ICRC's director of operations and senior officials from the Ministries of Foreign and Home Affairs in June.

- ▶ 1,109 detainees visited and monitored individually (including 13 females and 27 minors) and 464 newly registered (including 7 females and 19 minors), during 44 visits to 21 places of detention
- ▶ 159 RCMs collected from and 19 RCMs distributed to detainees
- ▶ 99 detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC support
- ▶ 483 release checks made and 562 confirmation of release letters sent

A seminar on health and medical ethics in places of detention took place in April under the auspices of the Indian Medical Association, with the support of the ICRC and the World Medical Association.

Prison doctors from all over India exchanged their experiences and discussed issues such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS in prisons, ethical dilemmas and the respective roles of the Indian and World Medical Associations.

Bhutan

The ICRC visited security detainees and relayed RCMs between detainees and their families. Families living in neighbouring countries received financial assistance to help them cover the costs of visiting their relatives held in Bhutan.

- ▶ 78 detainees visited and monitored individually (including 9 females and 1 minor) and 41 newly registered (including 9 females and 1 minor), during 2 visits to 2 places of detention
- ▶ 76 RCMs collected from and 67 RCMs distributed to detainees
- ▶ 6 detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC support

Maldives

The ICRC visited security detainees held in the Maldives.

- ▶ 26 detainees registered and monitored individually during 3 visits to 3 places of detention

WOUNDED AND SICK

In India, the physical rehabilitation centre at the Government Medical College in Jammu was run by the state branch of the Indian Red Cross and supported by the ICRC. The support involved providing training, materials and equipment to improve the quality and sustainability of services through the use of polypropylene technology and improvements in management and care.

- ▶ 809 patients (including 207 women and 51 children) received services at the ICRC-supported physical rehabilitation centre
- ▶ 124 new patients (including 29 women and 5 children) fitted with prostheses and 31 (including 7 women and 8 children) fitted with orthoses
- ▶ 139 prostheses (including 31 for women, 7 for children and 17 for mine victims), 34 orthoses (8 for women and 10 for children), 40 crutches and 20 wheelchairs delivered

The Bone and Joint Hospital in Srinagar renovated the physiotherapy department. The ICRC donated a generator and provided the centre with the necessary electrotherapy equipment and training.

AUTHORITIES

Some 100 delegates from Indian civil society and the government participated in a conference on the International Criminal Court organized by legal institutions, including the Indian Society of International Law (ISIL) and the ICRC. They discussed the responses of South Asian countries to the Court.

Delegates from Bangladesh, India and the Maldives participated in the Second Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on IHL held in New Zealand in August.

Government representatives from Bangladesh attended the Second Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees held in Geneva, Switzerland. Participants shared best practices and exchanged their experiences of incorporating IHL into domestic legislation.

Particular emphasis was placed on addressing the issue of persons missing in connection with conflict. After this meeting, the Bangladeshi authorities indicated their intention to establish a national IHL committee.

In Bangladesh, work progressed on draft national legislation to implement the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977 Additional Protocols.

- ▶ 150 government representatives attended a national seminar jointly organized by the ISIL and the ICRC in India marking the 30th anniversary of the 1977 Additional Protocols
- ▶ government officials from Bangladesh and India attended a regional seminar marking the 30th anniversary of the 1977 Additional Protocols in China (see *Beijing regional*)
- ▶ 42 participants from 9 countries representing government departments, academic institutions, civil society and the military attended the 10th South Asian Teaching Session, organized for the first time with NALSAR University of Law in Hyderabad
- ▶ 40 participants attended the 11th South Asian Teaching Session held in Bangalore
- ▶ in the Maldives, 40 government officials, members of the police and security forces, and representatives of the penitentiary authorities attended an IHL seminar

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

Discussions on incorporating IHL into army teaching and training continued with the Indian army training command. The Army War College and the National Defence College institutionalized IHL dissemination sessions for officers. The National Defence Academy incorporated 36 hours of IHL training into its curriculum for cadets.

- ▶ some 4,500 members of the Indian armed forces attended 30 IHL dissemination and training sessions
- ▶ members of the Indian armed forces departing on UN peacekeeping missions attended 8 IHL presentations
- ▶ some 650 officers from the Indian police and border security forces participated in 12 ICRC dissemination sessions, including in violence-prone areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and Chhattisgarh

CIVIL SOCIETY

The media in Bangladesh and India reported on IHL-related topics. Work began with the Press Institute of India on setting up a resource and training centre for journalists reporting on armed conflict.

After participating in ICRC-organized IHL programmes, seminars and events throughout India, teachers promoted IHL within their universities and students showed increased knowledge of and interest in studying IHL-related subjects. ISIL and the ICRC increased their cooperation and organized several lectures and seminars for law lecturers and launched the first edition of the *Handbook of International Humanitarian Law in South Asia*. In addition to the 75 colleges and universities already teaching IHL, 20 new institutions were in the process of updating their curricula to introduce IHL.

The Ministry of Education in Jammu and Kashmir expressed its support for the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme. Principals and teachers from 18 pilot schools in Jammu and Kashmir participated in a coordination meeting in Srinagar. Two monitoring teams were set up to review the first phase of the pilot project.

In recognition of its expert status on issues relating to IHL, think-tanks and NGOs invited the ICRC to participate in relevant events.

- ▶ some 200 journalists from across India participated in 4 ICRC-organized seminars on conflict reporting and IHL
- ▶ 22 editors from countries in South Asia participated in an ICRC-organized workshop in Dhaka at which they discussed reporting on armed conflict, journalists' security, the protection of civilians and IHL
- ▶ some 450 lecturers in law, political science and mass communication and hundreds of students attended ICRC-organized IHL training programmes, seminars and workshops throughout India
- ▶ 56 teams participated in the Indian round of the Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition and 6 teams participated in the South Asian round
- ▶ some 150 students, members of the armed forces, government officials and members of NGOs visited the ICRC delegation's IHL documentation centre in New Delhi
- ▶ a review of NALSAR University's distance-learning postgraduate diploma in IHL began

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Family links

With ICRC help, the National Societies of Bangladesh and India strengthened their tracing services. Post-tsunami capacity-building tracing projects continued in India.

The family-links activities of the Indian Red Cross were strengthened through training for staff and volunteers and the introduction of procedural guidelines. The National Society demonstrated its enhanced capacity during the floods in Bihar.

With ICRC support, the Bangladeshi Red Crescent continued to distribute RCMs and help families keep in touch, including those with relatives detained abroad. Following cyclone Sidr, the National Society and the ICRC assisted people who had lost touch with relatives, including by sharing a list of missing people through a poster campaign in the affected areas. National Society volunteers received training on the proper management of human remains.

IHL promotion

The National Societies of Bangladesh and India continued their activities to promote IHL and the Movement's Fundamental Principles, with ICRC support. The Indian Red Cross carried out door-to-door visits, press conferences and seminars as part of its campaign to prevent misuse of the red cross and red crescent emblems.

The ICRC's evaluation of the Bangladeshi Red Crescent's emblem campaign concluded that a strategy shift was needed to achieve the campaign's objectives.

- ▶ 22 Red Cross branch representatives from across India participated in a workshop for communication staff organized by the International Federation and the ICRC

Assistance to conflict- and disaster-affected populations

National Societies and their branches, with specially trained volunteers and ICRC support, implemented assistance programmes for communities affected by violence or natural disaster. The Indian Red Cross completed an assessment in Srinagar that highlighted the need for socio-economic support among families affected by the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and started to plan accordingly. First-aid training for National Society volunteers continued in violence-affected areas, with the incorporation of the Safer Access approach.

The Bangladeshi Red Crescent completed the construction of 15 wells and 750 latrines and distributed 1,500 mosquito nets in three districts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Mine-risk education

Mine-risk education continued in Punjab and Rajasthan. In Jammu and Kashmir, a local NGO produced a film about the Indian Red Cross's mine-related activities.

With ICRC support, a conference marking the 10th anniversary of the Ottawa Convention was organized by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and its Indian counterpart, with the Indian Red Cross's participation.