

KUALA LUMPUR (regional)

COVERING: Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore



ICRC regional delegation ICRC mission

Having worked in Malaysia since 1972, the ICRC established the Kuala Lumpur regional delegation in 2001 and an independent mission in Japan in 2012. It works with governments and National Societies – including through the regional resource centre supporting delegations in East and South-East Asia and the Pacific – to promote IHL/humanitarian principles and gain support for the Movement’s activities. In Malaysia, it visits detainees, works with authorities to address issues identified during visits, and helps detained migrants contact their families. In Sabah, it works with the Malaysian Red Crescent Society to improve primary health care for vulnerable communities.

YEARLY RESULTS

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

MEDIUM

KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS IN 2015

- ▶ People in immigration detention centres in Malaysia had better access to health care following ICRC-supported initiatives by authorities to deploy medical staff and establish a clinic on-site.
- ▶ Residents in Sabah, Malaysia, learnt to cope with basic health issues after attending Malaysian Red Crescent Society and/or ICRC sessions on good hygiene practices and first aid.
- ▶ Members of dispersed families contacted relatives through Movement family-links services. Movement partners, responding to recent migration and other events in the region, sought to improve these services.
- ▶ Authorities and other influential actors in Japan drew attention to key humanitarian issues, notably at events on the Arms Trade Treaty and through films and publications.
- ▶ At an ICRC workshop, military officers from Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore and 7 other countries learnt more about the norms governing military operations in support of law enforcement.

EXPENDITURE IN KCHF

Protection	1,506
Assistance	719
Prevention	2,284
Cooperation with National Societies	660
General	51

Total 5,219

Of which: Overheads 319

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	89%
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PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	17
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	35

PROTECTION	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	44
RCMs distributed	111
Phone calls facilitated between family members	66
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	3
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)	
ICRC visits	
Detainees visited	24,845
Detainees visited and monitored individually	226
Number of visits carried out	27
Number of places of detention visited	15
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	92
RCMs distributed	14
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	655

ASSISTANCE	2015 Targets (up to)	Achieved
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)		
Health		
Health centres supported	Structures	1

CONTEXT

The issues of migration and human trafficking were once again the focus of discussions in the region, following an incident where boats containing thousands of migrants from Bangladesh and Myanmar were stranded in the Andaman Sea, resulting in numerous deaths, as well as the discovery of burial sites for migrants and “trafficking camps” in the region in mid-2015. There were calls for region-wide action to address these issues.

In Malaysia, the government continued to face public discontent over socio-economic reforms. The authorities strove to deal with migration by detaining or, where possible, repatriating irregular migrants. The parliament passed several laws pertaining to national security, including in response to the alleged recruitment of Malaysians by foreign armed groups. Malaysia contributed troops to peacekeeping operations abroad.

General elections were held in Singapore. The country’s Prevention of Human Trafficking Act took effect in 2015. The International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) opened an office in the country, with a view to supporting regional law enforcement operations, particularly for curbing cyber crime.

In Japan, the parliament passed bills redefining the role of the Self-Defense Forces. Japan remained influential in regional security concerns and humanitarian affairs, making presentations in international forums on such issues as sexual violence during armed conflict.

The political climate and economy in Brunei Darussalam remained stable.

Malaysia chaired the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – which continued to promote regional cooperation in such matters as disaster management and migration – and hosted the ASEAN police coordination body’s (ASEANAPOL) headquarters.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC pursued initiatives to broaden awareness of and support for humanitarian principles, IHL and the Movement among influential stakeholders throughout the region. In Malaysia, it also strove to address humanitarian issues concerning detainees, dispersed families and vulnerable populations in Sabah.

The ICRC continued to visit detainees held in prisons and immigration detention centres in Malaysia; it also strove to secure regular access to immigration centres in Sabah and to security detainees. After its visits, the ICRC discussed its findings on detainees’ treatment and living conditions confidentially with the authorities concerned; an ICRC regional seminar on the management of correctional facilities supported these discussions. A Prisons Department/ICRC seminar on prison health-care services in 2014 helped facilitate the transfer of responsibility for providing prison health services from private companies to the health ministry. Health authorities in Sabah established a clinic at one immigration detention facility. Soap distributed by the ICRC helped detained migrants minimize the risks to their health; they also benefited from prison staff’s participation in educational sessions on managing communicable diseases.

To help address the health needs of communities living in remote rural areas of Sabah, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society and the

ICRC held first-aid training sessions for villagers/National Society volunteers and health-education sessions for children in primary schools. They also conducted community visits, together with state and district health officials, in order to determine what other activities might be undertaken to address these needs.

Members of families dispersed by migration or detention restored/maintained contact with relatives using the Movement’s family-links services. At regional events and through regular coordination, Movement partners reviewed their family-links activities during recent disasters and discussed how they could be improved.

In all the countries covered, the ICRC continued to work with the authorities, representatives of multilateral organizations and civil society actors – including academic institutions and the media – to promote awareness of humanitarian matters of common interest. It organized or participated in events such as seminars/conferences on the Arms Trade Treaty, humanitarian assistance/disaster relief and cyber warfare (with the Japanese Red Cross Society); together with ASEAN, it organized a basketball match for persons with disabilities. Dialogue with senior officials in Japan was reinforced by the visit of the ICRC’s president, and contacts were made in Malaysia’s Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM). In Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Singapore, security forces personnel learnt more about IHL and/or internationally recognized policing standards at ICRC workshops. University students refined their understanding of IHL at local/regional contests, including a new one patterned after the Jean-Pictet competition. Journalists drew on ICRC materials/events to promote humanitarian principles, notably through a Japanese *manga* and a Malaysian educational magazine featuring IHL-related themes.

Cooperation and mutual support among Movement components in the four countries continued. The Singapore Red Cross Society and the ICRC pursued efforts to explore private-sector fundraising; after the earthquake in Nepal, Movement partners launched a campaign to raise funds for the Movement’s activities. With help from their partners, the National Societies strengthened their ability to respond to emergencies, particularly with regard to restoring family links, and to promote humanitarian principles/IHL.

CIVILIANS

More residents in Sabah learn about basic health care

Access to health-care services remained difficult for communities in remote rural areas of Sabah, many of which host migrants and stateless persons. To help them, over 280 residents and volunteers from organizations serving these communities, along with almost 200 Malaysian Red Crescent volunteers, learnt how to safely stabilize and transport wounded and sick people; they did so through first-aid training sessions conducted by ICRC-trained National Society volunteers and/or ICRC staff. Nearly 600 children in primary schools learnt more about good health and hygiene practices during National Society/ICRC sessions, which helped protect them against illnesses.

State and district health officials – including those responsible for providing primary health care and for managing outbreaks of disease – and the National Society/ICRC conducted joint community visits to gain a deeper understanding of the health needs of vulnerable people. They pursued dialogue to determine what other activities might be undertaken to address these needs, such as opening a clinic. The National Society branch in Sabah continued to receive ICRC advice and support for improving/expanding its health-related activities.

Members of families dispersed by migration or detention restore/maintain contact with each other

In Malaysia, people used the Movement's family-links services to keep in touch with relatives separated from them. The families of four persons held at the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba received news of their relatives through RCMs, video calls and oral messages relayed by an ICRC delegate who had visited the internees.

Owing to administrative constraints, a planned assessment of family-links and other related needs of particularly vulnerable migrant communities in peninsular Malaysia was postponed; with ICRC guidance/support, National Society staff continued to prepare for this undertaking and to improve their family-links services.

Movement partners seek ways to strengthen family-links services in relation to disasters/migration

With a view to improving family-links activities throughout the region, over 40 coordinators and specialists from 18 National Societies (including in Japan, Malaysia and Singapore) and ICRC delegations in the Asia-Pacific region met in Kuala Lumpur to exchange information on tools/data protection and recommendations for the timely restoration of family links following natural disasters and in relation to migration. At a refresher course, specialists from the Japanese, Malaysian and three other National Societies, and the ICRC, reviewed family-links services during recent disasters in the region, such as Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 and the 2015 Nepal earthquakes, and identified areas for improvement. The International Federation and the ICRC sought ways to improve coordination of regional action in response to migration, such as during the Andaman Sea incident.

Limited dialogue took place between the Malaysian authorities and the ICRC on resuming cooperation in ensuring the welfare of victims of trafficking housed in government-run shelters.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

In Malaysia, 24,845 detainees and migrants benefited from 27 visits made by ICRC delegates, in accordance with the organization's standard procedures, to 7 prisons (including juvenile centres) and 7 immigration detention centres, including one in Sabah that the ICRC had last visited in 2013. The ICRC maintained dialogue with detaining authorities to secure permission to resume regular visits to migrants held in centres in Sabah and to security detainees.

Delegates monitored detainees' treatment and living conditions; and afterwards, discussed the findings confidentially with the authorities concerned, focusing on identifying/addressing the needs of migrants, unaccompanied/separated minors, women, victims of human trafficking, the elderly and the ailing. At the detainee's request, certain cases involving minors and other vulnerable detainees were referred to the IOM or UNHCR, or to consular offices – for foreigners – for specific assistance.

Prison/immigration officials and the ICRC maintained their dialogue on the welfare of detainees and the management of detention facilities, and on the support available from the ICRC, for instance for addressing health-related issues (see below). These discussions were supplemented by: workshops where best practices were shared and where the ICRC briefed participants on its work in places of detention; and general information sessions for prison staff assigned to juvenile centres and immigration personnel. One such workshop was held for 13 senior Prisons Department staff,

on the humanitarian challenges in managing Malaysian prisons; another one was organized for 26 depot commandants and officials overseeing migrant centres. The Malaysian Prisons Department and the ICRC enabled 30 prison directors from 12 countries across the region to gather in Malaysia for the second Asia-Pacific Seminar for Correctional Managers, where they discussed and proposed solutions to detention-related issues, notably overcrowding.

People in Malaysian immigration detention centres have better access to health care

Detained migrants in Malaysia stood to benefit from improvements in the provision of health care. Following on from the 2014 Malaysian Prisons Department/ICRC national seminar on health care in detention, the Prisons Department facilitated the transfer of responsibility for prison health services from private companies to the health ministry. The health ministry began assigning full-time medical staff to immigration detention centres. Both measures aimed to ensure that inmates in facilities within the health ministry's purview benefited from the same quality of care the ministry offered elsewhere in the country. With ICRC encouragement, health authorities in Sabah established an on-site clinic at a migrant centre; the clinic began functioning in late 2015. The health and detention authorities, at national and local levels, continued to receive technical advice/support from the ICRC for providing on-site health services and for hygiene promotion and other initiatives to improve health in detention. During an ICRC-organized workshop, they, along with medical professionals working in detention facilities, discussed such issues as women's health, medical ethics and the management of communicable diseases.

Three detainees at immigration detention centres obtained medical assistance with ICRC help: one received cash, and two others were referred to government hospitals for examination. Health-education sessions and distributions of hygiene items (soap for 4,130 detainees and sanitary kits for 80 female detainees) enabled detainees to minimize their health risks and the centres' staff to gain a better understanding of communicable diseases and ways to deal with them. Close to 30 inmates were provided items necessary for caring for their infants. The authorities at one juvenile detention centre received ICRC advice and some financial support for the repair of their water-supply system.

Detainees stayed in touch with their relatives through RCMs, phone calls and "safe and well" messages facilitated by the ICRC, often with the support of the Malaysian Red Crescent, which received ICRC support for resuming/expanding its family-links services at immigration detention centres.

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Government officials learnt more about IHL implementation, for instance the role of national IHL committees, through regular contact with the National Society/ICRC and by attending ICRC functions, such as events abroad for governments and academic/research institutions (see *Beijing*) and for Member States of the Commonwealth of Nations (see *Suva*).

Around 70 government officials, experts and Movement representatives from over 20 Asia-Pacific countries gathered in Malaysia for an ICRC conference on acceding to/implementing the Arms Trade Treaty and the Strengthening IHL process (see *International law and policy*). Participants also held discussions on technical matters, in preparation for the 32nd International Conference.

In Japan, despite the ICRC's efforts, there was no progress in the proposal to set up a group of parliamentarians to support the humanitarian agenda. In Malaysia, drafting of an IHL handbook for parliamentarians continued.

Japanese, Malaysian and Singaporean officials were urged to establish legal frameworks for facilitating the National Society/ICRC's work.

Japanese government officials discuss contemporary humanitarian issues

At meetings/briefings in the countries covered, the authorities, civil society representatives, other influential actors, and the National Society/ICRC exchanged views on detention, migration, the Health Care in Danger project and other IHL-related topics. Dialogue between Japanese government officials and the ICRC, notably during the ICRC president's visit to Japan and particularly in Hiroshima, centred on sexual violence in armed conflict and nuclear weapons. Other events – a symposium on the Arms Trade Treaty and a regional round-table on humanitarian assistance, hosted jointly with the Japanese foreign ministry and a Singaporean think-tank, respectively – encouraged further discussion.

The ASEAN departments of the countries covered and the ICRC interacted regularly on subjects of common interest (see *Jakarta*); Malaysia, during its chairmanship of the ASEAN, and the ICRC organized a wheelchair basketball match during the ASEAN Disability Forum, which sought to empower disabled people through sports.

Military officials further their understanding of the military's role in law enforcement operations

Instructors/officers of the region's armed/self-defence forces attending command and staff colleges/warfare training centres, or participating in national/multilateral exercises, enriched their knowledge of IHL and the Movement during ICRC training sessions/presentations and at local/overseas events, such as: an annual seminar at the National Institute for Defense Studies in Japan, a Japanese Red Cross-organized seminar on cyber warfare, and workshops/conferences on IHL at sea (see *Bangkok*) and on humanitarian considerations in military operations (see *International law and policy*). An ICRC course in Brunei Darussalam enabled 30 military officers from Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore and seven other countries to further their understanding of the norms governing military operations in support of law enforcement.

In Malaysia, senior ESSCOM officials and police officers assigned to sensitive areas and criminal investigations attended ICRC workshops/briefings on internationally recognized policing standards, including on the use of force and firearms, arrests and detention.

Peacekeepers from Malaysia's armed forces learnt more about IHL and the ICRC at predeployment briefings.

Relationships with the armed/security forces in the region expanded, particularly with the establishment/strengthening of dialogue with senior commanders of Japan's Self-Defense Forces, Malaysia's ESSCOM and Malaysian and Singaporean military policy/legal advisers. The Malaysian armed forces, including the navy, continued to draw on the ICRC's support for revising their IHL training courses.

Dialogue with ASEANAPOL and Interpol, and other armed forces present in the Pacific, also helped increase understanding of IHL and the ICRC's role.

A Japanese *manga* and a Malaysian educational magazine feature IHL-related themes

During ICRC lectures/presentations, students and teachers from Japanese, Malaysian and Singaporean universities strengthened their grasp of the ICRC's mandate and activities and of contemporary IHL-related issues. Their interest in IHL was stimulated further by participation in debates/competitions, in the region (see *Beijing*) and elsewhere; Malaysia hosted a new contest patterned after the Jean-Pictet competition.

Scholars discussed the links between IHL and Islam at a forum organized jointly with an Islamic university in Malaysia.

The media reported on humanitarian issues and Movement activities, aided by ICRC-provided materials in English and local languages, and information obtained from National Society/ICRC-organized activities, for instance field visits for Japanese journalists and a competition for young Malaysian writers. An English-language newspaper in Malaysia published a feature on humanitarian principles and the Movement in its educational supplement for secondary-school students.

Various audiences learnt more about IHL and the Movement via exhibitions and traditional/web-based publications/audiovisual products, such as Japanese-made films and a *manga* comic on the life of a child soldier in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Movement partners in the region explored ways to raise funds jointly with the private sector; for instance, they launched a campaign with a private regional transportation company in response to the earthquake in Nepal. The Singaporean Red Cross and the ICRC engaged a local sports company in a small fundraising project; they continued to consult Singapore-based businesses and aid organizations, with a view to refining their joint strategy for raising funds with the private sector.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

With support from Movement partners, the region's National Societies strengthened their ability to incorporate the Safer Access Framework in their activities and to respond to humanitarian needs (see *Civilians*). The Malaysian National Society participated in the ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise; and the Singaporean National Society organized training sessions/events on responding to natural disasters and on health-related activities during emergencies. Skilled Japanese Red Cross staff continued to be seconded to ICRC emergency teams; 36 new international staff members attended Movement-organized training that prepared them for their tasks as delegates.

The National Societies also used such support to strengthen their capacity to raise awareness of humanitarian principles, IHL and the Movement. The Brunei Darussalam Red Crescent Society and the ICRC held a colloquium on teaching humanitarian principles in secondary schools. A seminar helped 43 Japanese Red Cross personnel prepare themselves to serve as IHL focal points.

Guided by the International Federation and the ICRC, internal reforms at the Bruneian National Society continued.

Movement partners in the region continued to coordinate their approach to humanitarian issues. At an event in Malaysia, representatives from 22 National Societies in the Asia-Pacific region discussed ways to streamline their response during complex emergencies, including natural disasters.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
Red Cross messages (RCMs)			UAMs/SC*		
RCMs collected		44			
RCMs distributed		111			
Phone calls facilitated between family members		66			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		12	2	3	2
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		3			
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		3			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		59	12	10	12
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		5			
Documents					
People to whom travel documents were issued		1			
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)					
ICRC visits			Women	Minors	
Detainees visited		24,845	2,949	1,674	
			Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually		226	52	13	13
Detainees newly registered		213	52	13	9
Number of visits carried out		27			
Number of places of detention visited		15			
Restoring family links					
RCMs collected		92			
RCMs distributed		14			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		655			
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		1			

*Unaccompanied minors/separated children

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection programme)				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	6,738		
Cash	Beneficiaries	1		
Health				
Number of visits carried out by health staff		13		
Number of places of detention visited by health staff		11		