MESSAGE ON WORLD FIRST AID DAY 2018

World First Aid Day 2018 will be celebrated across the globe on the 8th of September to create awareness about this life-saving practice and inspire people to get trained in its use. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) introduced World First Aid Day (WFAD) in 2000. Since then the Red Cross movement across the countries has been holding events to mark the day.

The theme for WFAD this year is 'First Response to Road Crashes', encapsulated by the slogan, "You don't need a license to save lives". The fact is that almost every day, whether as pedestrians, riders, drivers or passengers, each one of us is a road user. It is estimated that, tragically, over 1.34 million lives are lost in road accidents and 50 million people are injured, some of them quite seriously. It will not be an exaggeration to say that the practice of First Aid needs to become a movement in the communities to address the growing risks we face today due to disasters, emergencies, and accidents. There is a need for providing First Aid training to students, youth, and first responders to meet the demand.

Indian Red Cross Society and St. John's Ambulance (India) have been at the forefront of providing First Aid training. Along with the general population, people ranging from those who work in vulnerable scenarios to communities who live in disaster-prone parts of the country are being trained to provide First Aid.

At a broader level, First Aid contributes towards the Sustainable Development Goal 3: 'Ensure Healthy Lives and Promote Wellbeing for All at All Ages' and Government of India's commitment towards 'Health for All'.

I urge all the IRCS State Branches and volunteers to observe the day by amplifying the message of World First Aid Day by holding awareness events and demonstrations to train people of all ages as well as exhort them to use protective gear like helmets and seatbelts to avoid injuries in the event of road accidents.

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