

REPORT

Two Credit Certificate Course on International Humanitarian Law
'Origin, Purpose and Development of Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement'

18th February 2023



The Center for Advanced Study in International Humanitarian Law, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law has organized a Two Credit Certificate Course on International Humanitarian Law starting from January, 2023. The third lecture of the series was delivered by **Prof. (Dr.) Sanoj Rajan** on the theme '**Origin, Purpose and Development of Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement**'. Prof. Rajan is currently a law professor at Zhejiang Gangshang University, China and has several accomplishments and accolades to his name. There was a succinct overview provided of the sub-themes covered during the lecture, which constituted of- the Red Cross Movement, Protection of human lives, infrastructure and facilities involved, the idea of Humanitarian Aid as well as a Case Study to substantiate the discussion.

Beginning with a brief introduction of the Red Cross Movement, he deliberated upon the inclusion of various other institutions in the provision of aid and the seminal contribution of Henry Dunant to International Humanitarian functioning as we know it today. Furthermore, Prof. Rajan highlighted the mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and its modus operandi, elaborating upon the cornerstone principles of Humanity;

Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Confidentiality, Dialogue and a No Weapon policy. Emphasising upon the ICRC's unique identity in times of war, he traced the history of the Red Cross emblem from the cross adopted by Swiss personnel's as early as 1863 and the subsequent roadblock with Islamic countries with reference to the same to the present day status.

Prof. Rajan further discussed the categorisation of medical personnel's along with the relevant provisions of law. In light of this discussion, the special protection and safety of human lives, infrastructure and required facilities provided for the purpose of aid were also deliberated upon. It is considered necessary, pursuant to the theme of emblems introduced earlier, that there exists a clear distinction between those involved in humanitarian aid in times of war and those who belong to the field in day-to-day services. The civilians who are caring for the sick and wounded combatants and civilians are also protected under International Humanitarian Law, which includes the right for inhabitants of the conflict zone to collect and care for wounded and sick.

The challenges in providing humanitarian assistance were classified into two parts- challenges posed by the government and those by non- state actors. There are several doubts on the impartiality, neutrality and regarding the extent of involvement of aid agencies that pose a hurdle to their work. However, there has been enormous acceptance and facilitation as well. Towards the end of his lecture, Prof. Rajan showcased an Afghanistan based case study to the participants. The study highlighted the vulnerability and lacunas in present day structure of medical aid in times of war.

There were a number of questions asked by the enthusiastic participants. Prof. Rajan concluded the lecture with an interactive question-and-answer session. The theme of Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement brought to an end Prof. (Dr.) Sanoj Rajan's first lecture of the course.