

INSIGHTS

CAMBODIA'S DISASTER OVERVIEW

THE OTHER SIDE

Mr. ANDRI SURYO

*Communications Officer
of the AHA Centre*



ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE

THE COLUMN

THE AHA CENTRE
NEWS BULLETIN
VOLUME 30

NEWS HIGHLIGHT



MARAWI
Philippines
21 July 2017

ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE FOR MARAWI

NEWS STORY

SIGNING OF
MEMORANDUM OF INTENT
BETWEEN THE AHA
CENTRE AND THE PACIFIC
DISASTER CENTER (PDC)

OPENING CEREMONY OF
THE 4TH BATCH OF THE ACE
PROGRAMME 2017

CFEDM TRAINING AND
CURRICULUM SYNC
MEETING

DISASTER OUTLOOK

15 TOTAL DISASTERS from
1 to 30 JUNE 2017



JUNE - JULY 2017

ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE FOR MARAWI

EDITOR'S NOTE**Greetings fellow ASEANers!**

The "One ASEAN, One Response" vision, which has been shared amongst the ASEAN Community since 2015, is a comprehensive effort coordinated by the AHA Centre to help ASEAN Member States (AMS) respond to disasters as one and to establish mechanisms that reduce disaster-related losses.

Throughout the years, the AHA Centre has continuously progressed, and in the past two months, we embarked on a new journey to provide humanitarian assistance not only to communities affected by natural disasters but also internally-displaced people from Marawi, as covered in this edition's News Highlight.

Following the progress and collaboration to enhance disaster management capacity in the ASEAN region, this edition also covers several events that began in June and July, including the signing of a Memorandum of Intent between the AHA Centre and the Pacific Disaster Center (PDC), CFE-DM Training and Discussion, as well as the opening ceremony of the 4th batch of the AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme.

In this edition's The Other Side section, we were thrilled to speak with Mr. Andri Suryo Maharaj, Communications Officer of the AHA Centre, who has managed The Column from its inception. Be sure to check out his story on how he first initiated the name of The Column.

Also, this edition will elaborate on Cambodia's disaster overview, which we hope will be insightful and beneficial for all readers.

If you wish to share your suggestions, comments or anything at all, please do not hesitate to contact us at comm@ahacentre.org.

Sincerely,


The Column Editor







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ONE **ASEAN**
ONE **RESPONSE**

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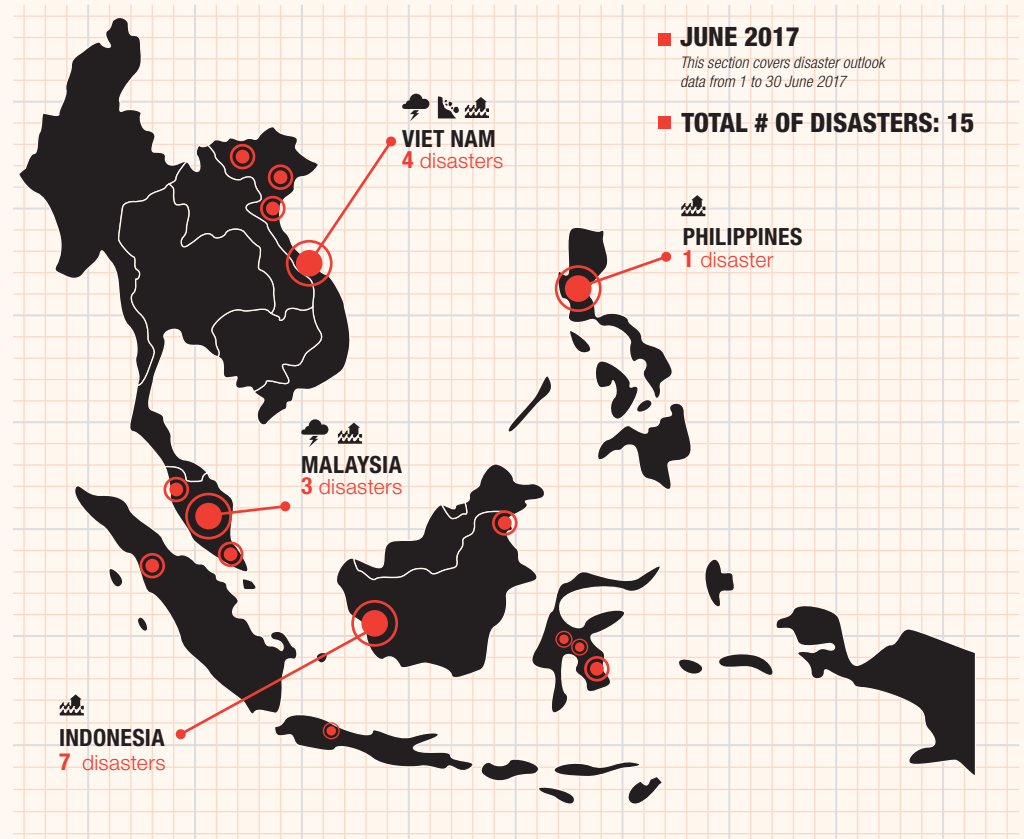
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5,000
Affected Houses



6,900 Ha
Affected Agriculture



598,000
People Affected



2
Injured People



2
Deaths



4,500
Displaced People

DISCLAIMER:

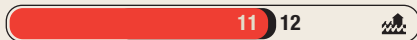
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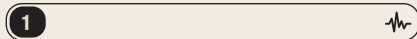
Basemap is from global administrative area. Information is generated from many sources including NDMOs, international organisations and news agencies.

DISASTER OUTLOOK

DISASTER COMPARISON NUMBER JUNE 2017 // 2016



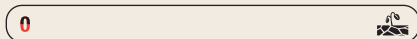
FLOOD



EARTHQUAKE



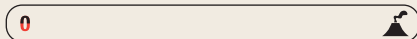
WIND



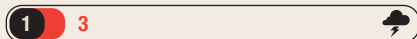
DROUGHT



LANDSLIDE



VOLCANO



STORM

2017 - BLUE BAR
2016 - BLACK BAR

MONTHLY OUTLOOK FOR JUNE

This month, 15 natural disasters occurred with significant impact to the region. Statistics-wise, 73% were caused by floods, followed by storms and landslides.

Flooding affected many areas in Indonesia, Viet Nam, Malaysia and the Philippines. Two heavy flooding events, which affected over 200,000 people, occurred in Maguindanao, the Philippines and Tolitoli, Indonesia. Additionally, floods also inundated several villages in 12 provinces of Viet Nam. The incidents caused one reported casualty and affected at least 600 houses and 1,600 hectares of agricultural land. In Malaysia, local authorities evacuated 200 people due to the floods in Melaka and Johor Baru. In total, floods affected at least 500,000 people.

FORECAST FOR JULY TO AUGUST

The forecast of the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre expected drier than normal conditions over central and southern Southeast Asia, including the Indonesian areas of Sumatra, southern Kalimantan, and Java, as well as Singapore and Malaysian Sarawak. Meanwhile, there is a slight probability of wetter conditions over coastal Myanmar, northern Thailand, northern Philippines, and the northern parts of Papua and Kalimantan in Indonesia. Near normal conditions are predicted for the rest of the region.

With the above situation, preparedness and mitigation against potential floods, landslides, drought, and fires should be considered by disaster management offices to reduce the possible impact.

(Source:
<http://asmc.asean.org/asmc-seasonal-outlook>).

INSIGHTS

CAMBODIA'S DISASTER OVERVIEW



According to the Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DMHA) 2014 publication Cambodia: Disaster Management, Cambodia's vulnerability to floods and droughts make it one of the most disaster-prone countries in Asia. The National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) is Cambodia's lead government authority for disaster management and response. The NCDM is primarily responsible for emergency preparedness and relief, and coordinates with international humanitarian communities, such as the AHA Centre, for cooperation and support. The Cambodian Red Cross (CRC) was officially adopted by NCDM as the primary partner to conduct relief operations, in addition to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), which also plays a significant role in disaster response and relief. The RCAF has trained with foreign militaries, including from the U.S., to improve coordination and response.

Despite the challenges of frequent natural disasters and developmental issues, the country has steadily improved, with positive trends in economic and human development indicators. Advancements in these areas will help the country be more resilient and less vulnerable to natural and human-induced disasters.



Floods

Two types of floods generally affect Cambodia. Overflows of the Mekong River and its tributaries, as well as from Tonlé Sap Lake (Great Lake), the largest freshwater body in the country, tend to cause the most damage. Flooding along the Mekong River and Tonlé Sap River plains occur on a nearly annual basis during monsoon season, allowing surrounding populations to take preparatory steps ahead of flooding season.

However, the country is also prone to flash floods, caused by heavy rains in mountainous areas, which in turn trigger flash floods along the streams and tributaries of the Mekong. These floods often damage crops and infrastructure along the tributaries of Tonlé Sap Lake.



Drought

Drought constitutes the second primary hazard to affect the country. Caused by delays in the arrival of or premature ends to seasonal rains, drought seriously affects agricultural productivity, especially among rice farmers who depend on annual rainfall or river-fed irrigation. A water management system allows many parts of the country to harvest a primary rice crop and a secondary harvest of vegetables or other crops.

OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 4TH BATCH OF THE ACE PROGRAMME 2017



Participants of the 4th ACE Programme pose for a group photo during the opening ceremony on 27 July 2017.



Secretary-General of ASEAN, H.E. Le Luong Minh, marks the official launch of the 4th batch of the ACE Programme with a strike of the gong.

The AHA Centre continues to shape future ASEAN leaders in disaster management through the AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme. This year, the programme welcomes its fourth batch of participants, with 17 professionals joining a series of training for the next five months.

On 27 July 2017, the programme was officially launched at a ceremony held in Jakarta, Indonesia. The event welcomed honourable guests including H.E. Le Luong Minh, Secretary-General of ASEAN, H.E. Kazuo Sunaga, Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN, as well as the Committee of Permanent Representatives from the ASEAN Member States, the ACDM Focal Point of Indonesia from BNPB, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, UN, IFRC, international organisations and other AHA Centre's partners.

Attendees gave a warm welcome to the 17 incoming participants in the ACE Programme. Acting Executive Director of the AHA Centre, Ms. Adelina Kamal, noted in her opening remarks that through the ACE Programme, the AHA Centre and ASEAN Member States could strengthen trust, confidence, and emotional connectivity.

"The success of the ACE Programme is due to the fact that it has been an ASEAN-led programme, implemented by the AHA Centre,

supervised by ASEAN Member States, and strongly supported by the Government of Japan," said Ms. Kamal.

As a proud introduction to our readers, below are the names of the participants of the 2017 ACE Programme:

- Mr. Phlang Ponleu Rath, Cambodia
- Mr. Toung Kimtol, Cambodia
- Mr. Henrikus Adi H., Indonesia
- Ms. Meiladyastrinda Hapsari, Indonesia
- Mr. Tingkham Khounsouvanh, Lao PDR
- Mr. Phonesavanh Saysompheng, Lao PDR
- Ms. Dr. Janaki Rani, Malaysia
- Ms. Murni binti Mat Amin, Malaysia
- Mr. Kyaw Thu Htike, Myanmar
- Mr. Nay Win, Myanmar
- Mr. Ryan Paul Roxas, Philippines
- Ms. Maria Rose Pondevida, Philippines
- Mr. Muhammad Azhar Said, Singapore
- Ms. Jittaporn Wilajit, Thailand
- Ms. Sophita Thanyalakmetha, Thailand
- Mr. Le Dien Minh, Viet Nam
- Ms. Pham Hong Quyen, Viet Nam

The AHA Centre would like to congratulate each of the participants of the fourth batch of the ACE Programme, and wish them luck in the exciting journey ahead with the AHA Centre in supporting "One ASEAN, One Response".

NEWS HIGHLIGHT

ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE FOR MARAWI

MARAWI
Philippines
21 July 2017



ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE FOR MARAWI

Team members pose for a group photo while processing relief items for communities from Marawi and surrounding localities.

July 2017 marked a historical month for the AHA Centre as it embarked on a new journey in the provision of humanitarian assistance. As part of the realisation of “One ASEAN, One Response”, the AHA Centre provided support to the Government and people of the Philippines by delivering ASEAN relief items for internally-displaced communities from Marawi and surrounding localities.

With the guidance of the Governing Board of the AHA Centre, and in coordination with ACE Programme graduates from the Philippines and Malaysia, the AHA Centre deployed ASEAN relief items from the warehouse in Subang, Malaysia. The AHA Centre delivered

3,090 personal hygiene kits, 600 family tents, 600 family kits, 600 kitchen sets, and four water filtration units in two batches, through the Davao International Airport on 19 July 2017 and through the Laguindingan Airport, Cagayan de Oro using Malaysian military aircraft on 21 July 2017. Acting Executive Director Ms. Adelina Kamal officially handed over the relief items on behalf of the AHA Centre, to the Government of the Philippines, represented among others by the Cabinet Secretary, the Secretary of Social Welfare and Development, Undersecretary of Defense representing “Bangon Marawi” Task Force, Assistant Secretary of Office of Civil Defense, Assistant Secretary of the Department of



AHA Centre representatives welcome the arrival of ASEAN relief items at Laguindingan Airport, Cagayan de Oro.



In a display of ASEAN solidarity, the AHA Centre hands over the ASEAN relief items.



Representatives from the AHA Centre, the Government of the Philippines, NADMA Malaysia and the Armed Forces of Malaysia pose for a group photo at Laguindingan Airport, Cagayan de Oro, 21 July 2017.

Health, the Philippine Armed Forces, other related agencies and stakeholders.

This extension of ASEAN support through the AHA Centre could not have been achieved without the profound support from the Government of Malaysia, in particular the National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) of Malaysia, SMART Team, and the Armed Forces of Malaysia, who lent their

state-of-the art A400M military aircraft to transport some of the relief items. Also crucial to the success of these efforts was support from the Government of Japan through the ASEAN Disaster Emergency Logistic System for ASEAN (DELSA) project, and the support of key partners such as the UN Humanitarian Response Depot of the World Food Programme, the Corporate Citizen Foundation of Singapore and the Direct Relief.

CFEDM TRAINING AND CURRICULUM SYNC MEETING



Participants of the CFEDM Training and Curriculum Sync Meeting pose for a group photo.

Over the years, experience has proven that humanitarian assistance cannot stand alone in providing aid during disasters without the support from civil-military actors.

A roundtable discussion and series of training sessions hosted by Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) Director Joseph Martin was conducted in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on 13-16 June 2017.

The event was attended by representatives from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, the U.S. Agency for International Development Offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA), the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the World Food Programme, U.S. Naval War College, the AHA Centre, as well as Singapore's Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC) and Ministry of Defence.

Senior leaders gathered at the roundtable discussed the importance of actions needed in order to improve coordination in humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HADR) military training and exercise events. According to Joseph Martin, civil-military planners and implementers need to be better prepared and understand the humanitarian landscape during a disaster.

The training and discussions aimed to provide a comparative review of civil-military courses in order to increase complementarity, potentially address gaps, and better meet regional demands for training.

As a result, a number of opportunities were identified to increase complementarity of civil-military training courses conducted by CFE, USAID/OFDA, Naval War College, and UNOCHA. The roundtable also highlighted ways to enhance understanding and familiarity with key CFE products and services, including



potential research opportunities that can be supported by CFE partner universities.

The event also facilitated planning discussions of U.S. Military exercises forecast over the next 2-5 years, as well as regional engagement meetings for Southeast Asia to optimise civil-military engagements among stakeholders, including the Regional Consultative Group and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus Experts Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

Finally, the event reviewed the civil-military coordination parts of the draft Sphere Handbook on the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response.

Mr. Arnel Capili, Director of Operations for the AHA Centre, represented the AHA Centre in the curriculum discussion.

"I came here to understand what CFE-DM, UNOCHA, and OFDA are doing in terms of training, because we would like to develop similar training courses for the ASEAN militaries," Mr. Arnel Capili explained. "The training is already developed and it's working, so we want to learn from their experiences and successes to help us craft our own instructions. I was able to understand these things by coming to this event."

SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF INTENT BETWEEN THE AHA CENTRE AND THE PACIFIC DISASTER CENTER (PDC)



Acting Executive Director of the AHA Centre, Ms. Adelina Kamal, and Executive Director of PDC, Mr. Ray Shirkhodai, shake hands after signing the Memorandum of Intent.

To enhance disaster management capacity in the ASEAN region particularly in risk assessment and early warning, the AHA Centre signed a Memorandum of Intent (MoI) with the Hawaiian-based Pacific Disaster Center (PDC) on 5 June 2017. The MoI signing aims to strengthen the two organisations' on-going partnership in advancing disaster risk reduction and regional cooperation in creating a resilient ASEAN.

The signing ceremony was conducted by Ms. Adelina Kamal, Acting Executive Director of the AHA Centre, and Mr. Ray Shirkhodai, Executive Director of the PDC. It was witnessed by Mr. Dody Ruswandi, Secretary-General of Indonesia's National Disaster Management Authority (BNPB), Ms. Malyn Tumonong of the ASEAN Secretariat, and Mr. Diman Simanjuntak of the U.S. Mission to ASEAN.

"Today, we are proud of our 13 year-old collaboration and partnership to enhance early warning, disaster management, and humanitarian assistance capabilities in the region. At this signing, we are thankful and filled with the hope and inspiration to continue working with our most valued partners to advance a worthy cause for all people in the region," said Mr. Ray Shirkhodai during the signing ceremony at the AHA Centre, Jakarta.

Ms. Adelina Kamal said that the AHA Centre had benefited from the strong support of all of its partners, adding, "The U.S. Government and PDC were among the first few early partners to support the AHA Centre even before it was established five years ago to facilitate cooperation and coordination of disaster management as well as emergency response among ASEAN Member States."



The signing ceremony was held at the AHA Centre, Jakarta, and witnessed by, (back row, from left to right) Ms. Malyn Tumonong of the ASEAN Secretariat, Mr. Diman Simanjuntak of the U.S. Mission to ASEAN and the Secretary-General of Indonesia's National Disaster Management Authority (BNPB), Mr. Dody Ruswandi.



Acting Executive Director of the AHA Centre, Ms. Adelina Kamal, speaks at the ceremony of the MoU signing between the AHA Centre and PDC.



Representatives from each organisation pose for a group photo during the MoU signing at the AHA Centre in Jakarta, on 5 June 2017.

The PDC has been involved with the work of the ACDM since the early days, dating back to April 2004 at the launching of the ASEAN Regional Programme on Disaster Management in Bali. The relationship pre-dates the Indian Ocean Tsunami and the ACDM initiative to embark on the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER). The PDC helped in the development of the ASEAN Disaster Information Sharing and Communication Network (ASEAN DISCNet), which was the genesis of the Disaster Monitoring and Response System (DMRS).

"The ACDM is enthusiastic about the new partnership that the AHA Centre and PDC embarked upon today. It is our greatest hope that the signing of the MoU will reiterate the significant partnership between ASEAN and the U.S. Government. We look forward to the eminent partnership and may we realise further the vision of 'One ASEAN, One Response,'" said Mr. Dody Ruswandi, speaking on behalf of the ACDM and the Governing Board of the AHA Centre.

THE OTHER SIDE

Mr. Andri Suryo

Communications Officer
of the AHA Centre

"I hope the Centre grows into an organisation that is more acquainted with the media so our operations, actions, and good deeds can be seen and heard more, not only by the people of ASEAN, but from all over the world."

– **Andri Suryo Maharaj**



Andri, how does it feel to be interviewed by The Column? You have been managing The Column since the beginning and have interviewed many people and today, the tables have turned.

Well, it is quite bizarre to be honest. But it's interesting. It's surreal. Just like you said, I have been managing The Column for more than two years, and I still remember the first day it was launched. My supervisor at that time wanted me to find a name for the newsletter. I could only come up with two names: AHA Centre Corporate Bulletin (ACCB) and AHA Centre Monthly News Bulletin (ACMNB). I was like, "Great, another acronym which people will forget," so I was unhappy and decided to look for another option.

Strangely, I was watching this documentary on YouTube about how ancient and historical buildings were built and I heard the word 'pillar' a lot. It is believed that these buildings survive the test of time due to their extraordinary pillars. These pillars are spread like columns, supporting the main structure and ensuring the weight of the building is fairly balanced. And at that time I had an "aha!" moment, "What about The Column?" I wanted this to be more than just a feel-good newsletter, a justification for the organisation to spend their budget on something that people might not care about. I wanted this to be a pillar of our core communications at the AHA Centre. So, voila, The Column was born.

How did you get into the disaster management / humanitarian field?

Well, by coincidence, I suppose. I was browsing through some materials on the Internet and I stumbled upon the job advertisement from the AHA Centre and I thought to myself, "hmmm...this sounds cool. The name is catchy and the work looks awesome. Let's give it a shot!"

But, seriously though, in a more detailed manner, to be honest, I had not been exposed to this so-called humanitarian, not-for-profit environment, let alone ASEAN before. I was straight-up media and public relations (PR) savvy. I was brought up working in different broadcasting media, from television to radio, and I had the opportunity to turn to the 'dark side' – PR – when I received my Master's in Media and PR in Newcastle, UK. I was gradually thinking differently. You know, from a journalist point of view to a PR professional. Moreover, I had some experience to implement my knowledge while I was studying there, so yes, that was my turning point.

So, I figured when I took this opportunity three years ago, I was so pumped, and thought, "Man I really have got to have this." And from there on, I have enjoyed this field very much.

How does your professional expertise in the field of communications and public relations support the AHA Centre to achieve its vision?

I had not been exposed to this intergovernmental-humanitarian-natural disaster-context before. Not to mention, all these acronyms made me confused in the beginning. I still remember the first two months were just like manic. I had to take aspirin for the headaches from all the confusion in remembering the acronyms (just kidding).

I thought for a second that maybe it was my shortcoming, and that it would get in my way in supporting the Centre to progress, but after two months, I found my pattern and I came to a conclusion that these 'shortcomings' were actually my strengths.

You see, in general, PR is about persuading people, convincing them to actually believe in your key messages, your vision, and your efforts in managing your organisation's reputation. In short, PR is what you say, what you do, and what others say about you (CiPR, UK). Whereas here at first, the job was more about reporting progress, projects' achievements, communicating milestones, and Member States' efforts in disaster management.

So then, I tried to implement the knowledge I had gained from my work in media and PR to tweak our communications strategy. We highlighted our efforts with the media, producing more and more "easy-to-read" publications, short videos and things like The Column. I wanted us to look and be perceived as a contemporary, creative, and digital-savvy organisation without sacrificing our core function to serve ASEAN Member States.

What has been the most challenging aspect as the Communications Officer of the AHA Centre?

Well, I believe in every organisation there will always be challenges. I am privileged enough to work with excellent people and extraordinary supervisors. I suppose in the AHA Centre, the most challenging aspect would be having not enough resources (mainly human resources) to implement key activities or to come up with new creative ways to spread our good deeds and engage with more stakeholders. Since I am the only Communications Officer, sometimes we had to pass on great opportunities in making news or stories from our activities simply because there was not enough time to execute the idea while also juggling two or three other things at the same time.

What have been your most memorable moments at the AHA Centre so far?

Wow, that's tough. I have a lot of them. Let's see, it was in Turkey when we had the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016. I was with my supervisor at that time and documenting our participation in several high-level meetings and conferences, taking photos and videos. So, that day we took part in the launch of the Regional Organisations for Humanitarian Action Network (ROHAN). Basically, it was a venue for regional organisations working in humanitarian issues such as ASEAN and the AHA Centre to network and exchange knowledge.

Long story short, after the conference was done, everybody was busy networking, chatting and exchanging business cards, etc. Then my colleague tapped my supervisor's back and told him the Secretary-General of a particular organisation was here. So, our supervisor replied "Oh, really? I have to see him then, just to say hi. Okay let's have a photo with him. Tell Andri to take the photo". So, my boss tapped the person on the shoulder and said "Hi, how are you? Long time, no see." They continued to chat for like a minute or two and my boss said "Andri, please take a photo of us please, this is the Secretary-General." I paused for a second tried to recall this Secretary-General's face. "I don't think this is him," I said to myself, but I took the photo anyway. Later on, I asked my supervisor, "Boss, are you sure that is him [the Secretary-General]? Because I don't think so." And then he said the funniest thing, "Yes, me too, I think we got the wrong guy [laughing out loud]. No wonder he was all confused when I said, 'Hello, Secretary-General'."

So yes, we got the wrong guy and it was crazy because it was so packed, like hundreds of people were there. Anyway, as we walked to the next meeting, we finally saw the actual Secretary-General. We immediately approached him and said how great it was to finally meet him, trying to hide our blushed faces.

What are some of your aspirations or hopes for the AHA Centre in the coming years?


First things first, I really hope we could get a decent espresso machine at the office [laughter]. But seriously, in terms of communications, I hope the Centre grows into an organisation that is more acquainted with the media so our operations, actions, and good deeds can be seen and heard more, not only by the people of ASEAN, but from all over the world. I hope in the future, we can really leverage our relationship with the media and perceive them as an asset of our core mandate to assist the region.


One **ASEAN** One **Response**


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**ONE ASEAN
ONE RESPONSE**

ABOUT ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia. As set out in the ASEAN Declaration, the aims and purposes of ASEAN among others are to accelerate the economic growth, social progress, cultural development, to promote regional peace and stability as well as to improve active collaboration and cooperation.

ABOUT THE AHA CENTRE

The AHA Centre is an inter-governmental organisation established on 17 November 2011, through the signing of the Agreement on the Establishment of the AHA Centre by ASEAN Foreign Ministers, witnessed by the ASEAN Heads of State / Government from 10 ASEAN Member States: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The Centre was set-up to facilitate the cooperation and coordination among ASEAN Member States and with the United Nations and international organisations for disaster management and emergency response in the ASEAN region.

ABOUT AADMER

The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) is a legally-binding regional policy framework for cooperation, coordination, technical assistance and resource mobilisation in all aspects of disaster management in the 10 ASEAN Member States. The objective of AADMER is to provide an effective mechanism to achieve substantial reduction of disaster losses in lives and in social, economic and environmental assets, and to jointly respond to emergencies through concerted national efforts.