

Pioneer of TIMA in Philippines

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The doctor who began the Tzu Chi International Medical Association (TIMA) in the Philippines passed away at 9.15 on the morning of August 17, at the age of 78. Dr. Leh Siu Chuan organized the first TIMA free clinic in the country in 1995; since then, it has held 152 free clinics and treated more than 10,000 people.

His passing brought deep grief to the foundation's members; they remembered an outstanding individual and doctor. As they stood in front of the hall of mourning, the grief was etched on their faces. "In the hearts of all Tzu Chi member and the heart of Master Cheng Yen, you were the model of a living bodhisattva," they said. "You led the Philippines in bringing medical care." In 1995, when he was deputy director of the Chinese General Hospital, Dr. Leh organized the first TIMA clinic, bringing together doctors, nurses and other professionals.



Alfredo Li, chief executive of Tzu Chi in the Philippines, made a speech in honor of Dr. Leh: "he was the first person to bring together people for TIMA. I saw his contribution. The most important is that he took the risk and brought all the people together for this mission. We mobilized several thousand people and performed operations. In the most difficult circumstances, we carried out medical service."

Three years ago, Dr. Leh had a stroke; his condition did not improve. "He had been in a hospital for a long time," Li said. "I regularly went to see him. I knew that he could leave us at any moment. But, when I heard the news, I was very sad. It is also a blessing for him; I hope that he can return to us soon."

Although Dr Leh has left us, his spirit and the example he set have left a deep impression in all our hearts. Our life may be long or short but enlightenment is eternal. Everyone must seize the moment and step forward to give.