

# Bringing back eyesight to visually impaired

TAWFIQUE ALI

Aprivate eye hospital in the city undertook a week long charitable treatment programme for the eye patients.

Mojibunnessa Eye Hospital located at house no-11 on the road no-28 (old) in Dhanmondi residential area took up the noble mission of bringing back vision to those who suffer from blindness or eyesight problems and are not in a position to bear expenses for treatment.

"No patients went back untreated who turned up and registered their names," said the hospital's chief consultant Prof Syed Modasser Ali. "Priority was given to patients who came from outside Dhaka."

The hospital charged no fees for the use of its operating theatre, surgery equipment and other logistic facilities for eye treatment under this programme, said Kona Reza, chairman of the hospital.

"We are ready with spectacles and medicines required for 1,500 patients," Prof Ali said.

Jewel Vision, a shop of optical equipment, is donating spectacles and lens while Aristopharma, a pharmaceutical company, is donating medicines.

A team of six ophthalmologists and surgeons were engaged in the campaign without taking any fees. The surgeons conducted ten cataract surgeries every day on an average, said Prof Ali. The hospital also provided services of consultation, contact lens, phaco surgery, glaucoma treatment, oculoplastic sur-

gery, vitreo renital surgery, biometry, perimetry and paediatric eye care.

The poor cannot afford treatment of eye complications due to financial constraints. The expense for a cataract surgery is at least Tk 5,000.

Bichitra Roy, 54, who came from Gopalganj to register her name on the opening day (February 13) to get eye treatment under the programme, said she lost the sight of her left eye four years ago and the right one a year ago.

"Her case is quite compli-

cated, but we hope she will get back her eyesight after surgery," said attending doctor Md Sanwar Hossain.

The most common reasons behind blindness include cataract, refractive error, corneal ulcer, trauma, childhood complications, deficiency of vitamin A, glaucoma, retinal xerofis, and age and diabetes-related diseases, he said.

Seven-year old Nafisa, who came from New Elephant Road area, said: "I see things hazy." Doctors gave her spectacles on the first day of the campaign.

"Around 14 lakh people in the country lose eyesight due to cataract complications every year," said Dr Md Sharfuddin Ahmed who works at Mojibunnessa Hospital. Six lakh of them can be operated and cured, he said.

According to Ahmed, at present there are around 600 ophthalmologists in the country and 150 of them are surgeons. Due to inadequate number of doctors, around 50,000 visually impaired people now await treatment.

The six-member team of ophthalmologists that took part in the campaign included Dr Md Sirajul Islam Mollah, Dr Md Anisur Rahman and Dr Dipak Kumar Nag.

The hospital has raised a Tk 5 lakh Zakat fund with the donations from its doctors, said Prof Ali.



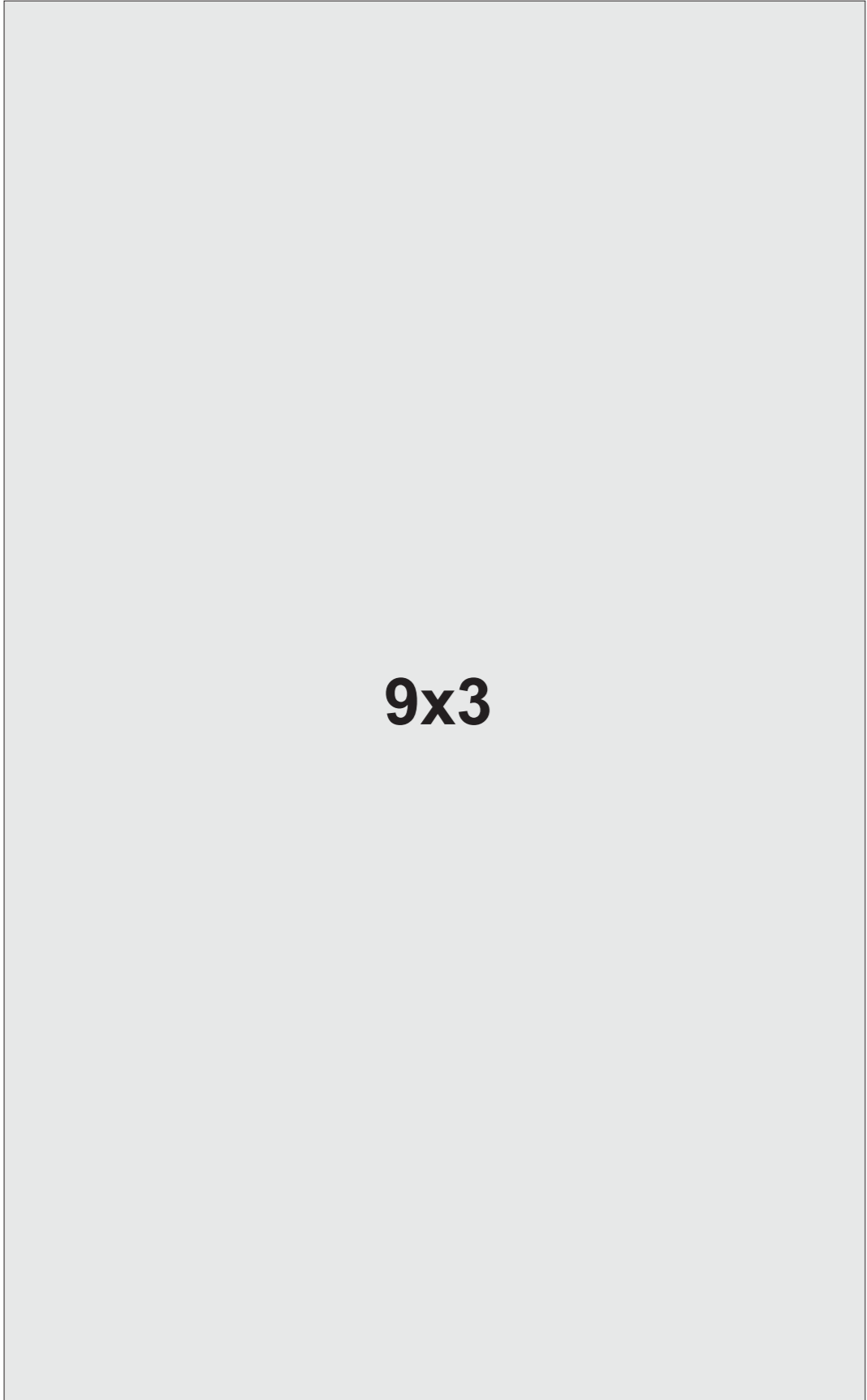
Doctors treating a patient at the operation theatre of Mojibunnessa Eye Hospital in Dhanmondi.



9x3



10x3



9x3



9x2