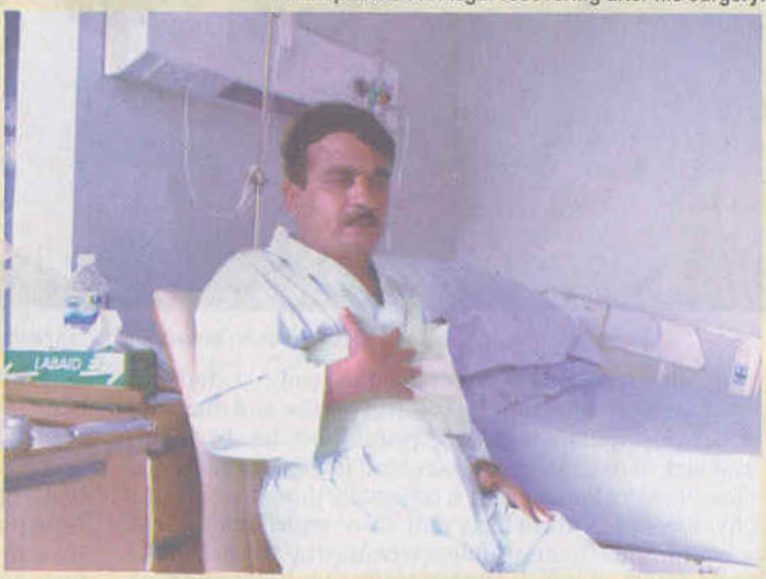
heart-lung machine is used to artificially pump blood during surgery. Once surgery is completed the heart is restarted. This procedure, for obvious reasons, carries a huge amount of risk. Also veins, which have different characteristics from arteries, are taken from the legs (known as Venus Grafting) to replace the arteries. These veins stop working after some time and it takes a painfully long time for the leg or hand to heal. A new method is set to revolutionise the way bypass surgeries are carried out. It is called the off-pump beating heart arterial bypass surgery. It is a method that involves far less risk and has a high rate of success. What's more this method is already at work in our country.

Dr Lutfur Rahman, a pioneer of bringing this revolutionary method of surgery into this country, has so far successfully operated on almost 1500 (1000 others in the conventional method) patients using this latest technology. With this method it is possible to carry out this operation by keeping the heart beating. A device called an OCTOPUS, developed by a company in the USA, is used to keep the heart beating while the patient is operated on. It virtually eliminates all the complications involved in an open-heart surgery. The most amazing thing is that Rahman has no formal training in this procedure. "I collected information and data from seminars and symposiums, watched slide shows and films and read thoroughly from the Internet and many journals", says Rahman, "and I have perfected this procedure using my own experience and knowledge." Currently only about 20% of heart surgeons around the world are capable of carrying out this procedure. Rahman's remarkable achievement is being recognised not only at home but abroad as well.

The off-pump beating heart was invented in the USA. The OCTOPUS machine has a set of small suction ports. Using these ports only the parts that need to be operated on are kept still. An artificial artery is used for temporary blood movement. A bypass surgery is carried out outside the heart; so, theoretically it is not necessary to stop the heart to clear the blockages. In the conventional open-heart surgery the heart is stopped and may lead to many complications. When the blood goes into the

A satisfied patient. Ali Asgar recovering after his surgery.



Muhammad Wahid Murad was determined to have his bypass surgery abroad but is now glad that he had it done in his home country.