

different parts of the body to replace the coronary artery.

Rahman has successfully done beating heart surgeries on patients from 26-year-olds to 86-year-olds. The emphasis is on keeping the heart going which makes it equivalent to any other general surgery. As such the recovery process is very quick and has very few complications. "Patients start having tea and biscuits four to five hours after surgery," says Dr. Rahman, "I have done surgery on patients who got turned away from other centres in the country. When asked about how heart patients always complain about postoperative recovery he said, "If postoperative care is substandard, that means the surgeon is also not competent.

It costs around two lakh taka to do a bypass surgery in Labaid (which includes medicine, food and hospital stay). "I do not compromise on the instruments. I always demand for the best in quality." For poorer patients he discounts to as much as 1lakh 75thousand sometimes. Dr Rahman identifies completely with the woes of patients of the country with the private doctors. "Doctors should be more caring towards patients. The habit of just seeing patients in the evening should be stopped. These doctors hardly spend any time with the patients because of their tight schedule," says Rahman, "If someone falls ill in the morning he has to be seen right away. Making him wait till the evening is inhuman." says Rahman who works a demanding twelve-hour shift at the hospital.

Born in Pabna in 1962 Dr Lutfur Rahman spent most of his childhood in the village of Atghoria in Pabna. He completed his SSC exams from Pabna Salim Najir School in 1979 and two years later gave his HSCs from Pabna BL College. He got admitted to Dhaka Medical College and completed his MBBS in 1988. Later he did an MS in Cardiac Surgery from the National Heart Foundation in 1997 and later joined there as the Assistant Professor. After 10 years of government service he joined Shikder Medical Hospital as Chief Surgeon. After three years in July 2004 he joined Labaid Cardiac Hospital as the Chief Cardiac Surgeon.

Rahman will be honoured with the Bidhan Chandra Rai Award for bringing about a new chapter in Bangladesh's Cardiac surgery.

BANGLADESH is a high-risk country for diabetes and heart diseases. "It's because of the extremely unhealthy lifestyle we lead," says Dr. Rahman, "People start having high cholesterol from a very young age. Children have nowhere to play. We make them eat all kinds of fatty food like eggs, milk and butter but where will they shed it off? Schools are built in houses. Children are treated like broiler chickens and moved from one room to the other. Even after school they don't have anywhere to run around, although fried chicken shops and other eateries are popping up everywhere. All this rich food and stressful lifestyle combined with lack of exercise are major contributing factors to high cholesterol. Smoking and red meat should also be avoided. People with diabetes and a family history of heart disease should be extra careful."

"In terms of technology we are very advanced and if we dedicate ourselves to this work we can do much better. An example of this advancement is in cardiac surgery," says Dr Rahman, "All we need is dedication. Unfortunately, many of us don't have that. Even teachers these days concentrate more on politics and private teaching to make money instead of really educating." A large part of Rahman's success stems from patriotism and a commitment to his profession. "I felt really bad when I saw people going to India, Singapore and Bangkok for heart surgery and spending so much money when it was possible to do them at home. I left government service when I saw that many of my senior doctors

