



# A hospital by the people, for the people in just 14 days

JINAT JAHAN KHAN

Bidyanondo Foundation and Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) have jointly set up a field hospital in Patenga, Chattogram. It was inaugurated by CMP Commissioner Md. Mahabubor Rahman with Faruk Ahmed, the vice-chairman of Bidyanondo at BK Convention Hall on July 1, 2020. This is a rare and inspiring scenario as a voluntary organisation started a well-equipped hospital with public donations and efforts in just 14 days.

## A hospital in '14 days'

Bangladesh has seen quite a few heartbreaking incidents where some Covid-19 patients died because they couldn't get treatment on time or the medical facilities were not available in their region. These tragic incidents provoked the well-known voluntary organisation, Bidyanondo, to get involved with the medical sector.

Fortunately, the owners of BK Convention Hall came forward offering their hall, free of cost, to support this noble cause. The dedicated volunteers of Bidyanondo Foundation worked around the clock to redecorate the entire place and convert a simple convention hall into a well-equipped hospital in just 14 days. They followed the instructions given by civil surgeons and medical experts. They started their activities only after the experts were pleased with the arrangement.

CMP-Bidyanondo hospital started its journey with 50 beds which is now a 100-bed hospital. They have separate wards for men and women with 19 and 17 beds respectively. It has a central oxygen supply system installed and has a total of 70 oxygen cylinders in the hospital. They also have 2 ambulances for emergency patients.

Establishing and maintaining a hospital comes with a long list of expenditures. Donations from individuals and corporate organisations are the main source of funds for this hospital.

## A home for Covid-19 patients

The hospital has two types of services-- indoor and outdoor services. The indoor service is for Covid-19 positive patients. The patients who need medical treatment to recover from Covid-19 are kept here

mental health. They also provide story and colouring books to the children with Covid-19 to keep them occupied without screen time.

Those who are not in critical condition are sent to home isolation. However, they regularly keep track of their condition through phone calls.

The medical facilities are also available for non-Covid-19 patients and most of these facilities are free. Till now, over 284 patients have received medical treatment

Bidyanondo has taken the responsibility of their medical staff as well. They have arranged separate residences for frontline workers as they cannot go back to their houses fearing the risk of infection.

They are also providing transportation facilities to the frontline workers, especially for the female staff, to make their life a little easier.

## More than just a hospital

Dr Asma Akhter shared some of the inspiring stories of the hospital. One of the most horrifying aspects of Covid-19 is that you cannot meet your loved ones. The loneliness and anxiousness can worsen the condition of a patient.

This is why they've arranged everything possible to keep the patients engaged. They arranged Eid Ul-Adha prayer and a special menu for all the Covid-19 patients and medical staff in the hospital during Eid. She also shared how a child with Covid-19 got hooked to books, thanks to their book-sharing initiative and they were happy that they could make the stay of their little patient comfortable and enjoyable.

"A worth-mentioning experience was when we delivered a baby of a mother with autism in an awful situation amid the pandemic. We were happy that we could save both mother and baby due to the medical facilities that we have and the baby got a new life. All these tiny experiences mean a lot for us," said Dr Asma.

Surviving Covid-19 and going back to the normal life is nothing but winning a war. And Bidyanondo celebrates each of the patients' victory by giving them a crest and a certificate as a gesture of celebrating and welcoming a new life.



free of cost. Everything that a Covid-19 patient needs including food, medicines, other essentials and even WiFi is provided free of cost.

All kinds of tests needed for patients are also arranged by the hospital. The foods given to the patients are prepared by the volunteers following guidelines from Achia Pervin Ali Shampa, nutritionist, Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

Counselling service is also available for Covid-19 patients to check up on their

in this hospital and among them, 142 were Covid-19 positive.

## The medical team of CMP-Bidyanondo Field Hospital

The hospital has a dedicated medical team of 12 doctors, 10 nurses, 5 ward boys and 5 cleaners. They also have 5 doctors, 5 nurses and 2 cleaners as female frontline workers. Another team of 20 volunteers is also working tirelessly alongside the medical staff.