

## Patients' plea falls on deaf ears

3 doctors attend over 500 patients at CMCH emergency deptt a day

DWAIPAYAN BARUA

Abdur Noor, a construction worker with serious injuries in his legs, was screaming in pain inside an auto-rickshaw in front of the emergency department of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) for 20 minutes.

Mahbulul, who brought him to the hospital from Satkania some 35km off the city, looked so helpless since his repeated entreaties to get his fellow worker carried to a doctor's room fell on deaf ears of the ward boys or other staffs.

Two ward boys sitting on a bench and taking tea advised Mahbulul to wait until one of the six trolleys or three wheel chairs returned from different wards.

Finding no other options, Mahbulul took Noor on his lap with an exhausting effort and

headed inside. Noor developed fractures in the legs when he slipped from a rooftop during a construction work at Satkania. The fractures were detected in X-ray Noor got done from outside the hospital later.

This is the picture of the emergency department of CMCH, the lone government hospital for the people of greater Chittagong division, on Thursday.

Noor and his friend had more to see before they could reach the on-duty doctor at the emergency.

Mahbulul had to rush for a ticket laying Noor on the floor for making an entry when a brother intercepted them.

At last they had a call from the on-duty doctor who advised Noor for admission at the orthopedics department.

Having no preparation for getting admitted, Noor requested

for a bandage, which was not available at the emergency.

When asked about the plight of Noor, Emergency Medical Officer (EMO) Dr Ajoy, also incharge of the department, said all kinds of patients turn up at the emergency for treatment. "We are here only to examine the state or sort of disease or problem the patients come up with and refer them to different wards accordingly, he said.

Emergency patients such as critically injured and poisoned or burnt ones are advised for admission while the general patients are sent to different outdoors, he said.

"But, we are to do something more such as primary or immediate treatment in several cases," the EMO said.

But the patients said the eight-room emergency department

lacks in apparatus essential for diagnosis and the staffs often misbehaved with them.

Sharif, a third year student of Chittagong Medical College, said he had to suffer due to non-availability of trolley when he brought his uncle for treatment at the emergency a month ago.

The poor patients very often get ill treatment here by the staffs and officials, he said.

Six trolleys and three wooden wheelchairs are not sufficient for the patients turn up at the department everyday. Besides, all of them are also not in a good shape, said the patients.

Tahmina Khatun, relative of a patient, said patients mostly suffer due to the cumbersome procedures one has to go through at the emergency department before treatment or admission to the hospital.

"The staffs hardly help the patients with information about the procedures. They rather behave very rudely with them, even with the serious ones sometimes," she said.

Saber, one of the 30 ward boys at the emergency department, said they frequently come across patients with grievous injuries.

"We are not moved so much as it should be as the unpleasant sights leave some bad impact on us and make us act a bit less politely," he said.

Kafil Uddin Chowdhury, an internee doctor, said the department should be equipped with machines required for immediate X-ray, ultrasonogram, identification of blood sugar and Electronic Cardiographs (ECG).

"The emergency department of such a large government hospital should have such facilities when even a modern ambulance has," he said.

Dr Ajoy said such facilities are a crying need for the department.

He said with the existing facilities, three doctors in three shifts put on sincere efforts to render medical service to over 500 patients at the department everyday.

He, however, said the department has sufficient medicines, including anti-biotic and pain killers for instant treatment.

## Paediatric surgery needs govt support in Bangladesh

Three faculties on paediatric surgery from Australia, United States and Spain talk to The Daily Star on the sidelines of an international conference in Chittagong



Prof JM Hutson



Prof Steven Rothenberg



Prof Jose Boix-Ochoa

ABDULLAH - AL MAHMUD

With little support from government, Bangladesh could develop paediatric surgery further to provide treatment to children with congenital malformation of rare conditions, said world famous faculties on paediatric surgery.

Paediatric surgery, though in its early stages of development, is now progressing very well in Bangladesh, they added.

They were talking to The Daily Star during an international conference of Paediatric Surgeons in Saarc (Fapss) in the port city recently.

The government support could have brought the most advanced medicine and technology required for paediatric surgery, they said.

Prof J M Hutson of Australia, Prof Jose Boix-Ochoa of Spain and Prof Steven Rothenberg of the United States talked about different aspects of treatment, including the prospects of pediatric surgery in Bangladesh.

Prof Hutson is a director of the Department of General Surgery at the Royal Children's Hospitals in Australia with special skills in abnormalities of the pelvis such as anorectal anomalies, inter sex and urological problems.

Prof Hutson said with dedi-

cated surgeons and government support for equipments and resources, there is bright prospect of paediatric surgery in Bangladesh.

"Main setbacks in the sector are lack of training and inadequate number of textbooks," he said.

"Government support for surgical training at home or overseas training under scholarship would be an advantage. Besides, specific government grant for books in department libraries could help over come setbacks," said Professor Hutson.

It is also essential to encourage relationship with foreign experts so that they can exchange technology and expertise, he said.

Referring to the advanced technology in the field, he said, "Laparoscopy is a wonderful new way to do surgery that enables children to recover quickly which saves money and time."

"The initial equipment cost is great, but once the set is purchased it will save money. Even more importantly, it enables some operations to be done much better than an open operation," he said. "The equipment is delicate and needs trained nurses to deal with it and also special equipment to protect it during sterilization," said Prof

Hutson.

Professor Jose Boix-Ochoa is the secretary of the World Federation of the Associations of Pediatric Surgeons and an authority on Diaphragmatic Hernia and Gastro-esophageal Reflex (Dhgr).

"Quality of pediatric surgeons here is of very high standard. They are up-to-date despite many constraints," Prof Boix-Ochoa said.

About the constraints he said, "It's a problem of financial support. In our country we have other kind of technology. Government support, logically or financially, is available."

"Paediatric surgeons in Bangladesh are able if they have technology. You see, some kind of treatments have been developed in Bangladesh by Prof Tahmina Banu. It's novelty in the world. Now she needs support of the government to get technical utility," Prof Boix-Ochoa said.

"Visit to Bangladesh helped me know how they deal with the problems, which are not common in other countries," he said.

Prof Steven Rothenberg is expertise in minimally invasive surgery (laparoscopic and thoracoscopic) in neuritis, infants and children.

Rothenberg said resources are the biggest setbacks for paediatric surgical treatment in

Bangladesh, especially for minimally invasive surgery, which require expensive equipment.

"I think the prospects are good. The primary need is to have dedicated surgeons," he said. "And the surgeons here have the ability and deserve to bring new techniques," he said.

In this regard Prof Rothenberg said, "Their (Prof Dr Tahmina and her colleagues) interest and dedication to bring the most advanced technology and medicines to the children despite the difficulties they face inspired me to attend the conference in Bangladesh."

"To deal with the constraints the government should provide money for procuring necessary equipments and reach the benefits to the children," he said.

"Laparoscopic surgery allows us to perform many procedures with better visualisation and understanding while greatly decreasing the pain and morbidity. This results in quicker recovery and much shorter hospitalisation, which not only benefits the child but the whole family," he said.

"I am happy to help teach these techniques and lend my experience," said Prof Rothenberg.



(Top) The emergency department of Chittagong Medical College and Hospital, (bottom left) a patient walks to the emergency department with the help of a relative, (right) the patients wait for tickets at the counter.

## theweekthatwas

### Workshop on forestry

A ten-day training workshop on "Forestry research methodology" began at the Institute of Forestry and Environmental Science of Chittagong University (CU) on Tuesday.

Chittagong University Vice-Chancellor AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury inaugurated the workshop as the chief guest. CU Forestry Institute, Bangladesh Forest Research Institute (BFRI) and SDC jointly organised the

workshop.

Science Faculty Dean Prof NSM Yahiyah and BFRI Director Dr Md Ashraful Hoque were present as the special guests in the workshop with Forestry Institute Director Dr M Safiul Alam in the chair.

Prof Nuruddin said regular afforestation and maintenance of the forestland will create huge employment opportunity side by side with benefiting the country economically.

He said such a workshop to enhance the practical knowledge and skill and called upon the participants

for making proper application of the new theories and findings they will acquire from it for the welfare of the people and the country.

### Killing of NGO worker condemned

Hill Women's Federation on Thursday condemned the killing of a tribal woman allegedly by settlers on December 5 in Khagrachhari.

Justice Mohammad Habibur Rahman, former chief advisor to a caretaker government, speaks as the chief guest at a function at the day-long Human Rights Fair at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), Chittagong Centre on Saturday. Academy for Educational Development

Federation President Sonali Chakma and General Secretary Antarika Chakma in a statement said a gang of four to five criminals brutally stabbed Josy Chakma, 28, a non-government organisation (NGO) worker to death on her way to office at the West Kathaitali area under Dighinala Police Station in Khagrachhari on Monday.

Josy was working for the micro credit project of Brac, a leading NGO, in the hill tracts and elsewhere.

The criminals also took away around Tk 28,300 from her. Josy, a pregnant woman, was rushed to the nearby hospital where the doctors declared her dead.

The leaders demanded immediate and exemplary punishment to the culprits responsible for the incident.

### CU teachers, students stage hunger strike

Teachers and students of Chittagong University (CU) staged a four-hour hunger strike and formed a human chain in the port city on Wednesday with a view to creating mass awareness against the bomb blasts across the country.

Several hundred students and

teachers joined the half-an-hour human chain in front of the Chittagong Shopping Complex at Sholoshahar.

They observed the token hunger strike in the morning on the Sholoshahar Railway Station premises where several cartoons on the bomb attacks were displayed.

Prof Anupam Sen, Prof Gazi Saleh Uddin, Dr Moimul Islam and Ali Asgar Chowdhury joined the human chain.

### Sanmar Property Fair begins

A nine-day "Sanmar Property Fair" began here in the port city on Thursday.

Sanmar Properties Limited, a leading real estate firm of the port city, organised the fair for the second time at the Sanmar Ocean City near GEC intersection.

Editor of The Daily Azadi MA Malek inaugurated the fair. Sanmar Chief Operating Officer Mofakharul Islam Khasru and Manager (Marketing) Selim Bin Saleh were present.

Sanmar offers discount and gifts to the intending customers in the fair.

### 'Workshop on

### human trafficking'

Speakers at a workshop on Wednesday called upon the people to be aware of the human trafficking from the country.

Antar, an NGO, organised the workshop on "Creating awareness against human trafficking with the participation of religious leaders" at Banskhalhi upazila hall room.

Nur Mohammed Mazumder, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of the Banskhalhi

upazila, was present as the chief guest. A total of 27 members of the NGO participated in the workshop.

District representative Towhidul Islam highlighted on the human trafficking while Mohammed Nurul Islam dealt with responsibility and precautionary measures in this regard.

The workshop recommended a plan for next six months to accelerate the movement for the cause.

### Political parties

### urged to hold dialogue

Speakers at a meeting on Tuesday underscored the need for dialogue among the political parties to address the present crises resulted from bomb attacks across the country.

They were addressing at the monthly meeting of Chittagong Unnayan Sangram Parishad at Bangabandhu Bhaban at Momin Road in the city.



STAR PHOTO



A "Pradip Prajwalan (candle lighting) programme was held in memory of those who died in accidents at the ship-breaking yards at Sitakunda. Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), a Chittagong-based non-government organisation, organised the programme at

STAR PHOTO