

Seven-and-a-half-year-old Laboni has a hole in her heart. In medical terms it is Ventricular Septal Defect or VSD. She also has Pulmonary Standard (PS), a problem in the blood circulation since birth. To get better she has to undergo a 3 to 4 hour operation but one that may allow her to go home after 4 to 5 days after surgery. Her mother holds Laboni's younger brother in her arms and looks anxious. They heard about this hospital that will make her well from a close relative who had been here and have come all the way from Sylhet.

The first thing that one notices about the hospital is the glaze on the floors. The cleaners are constantly moving around the corridors to ensure that the place remains spick and span. Even the drinking water system in the hospital is totally distilled and comes with a purifier system. Such emphasis on cleanliness is not a common thing in most Bangladeshi hospitals, which is why it is so refreshing.

Snuggling right in between BIRDEM Hospital, the DAB (Diabetic Association of Bangladesh) Cardiac Centre, an example of what a hospital should look like, came into being in 2001. It was not until October 2003 when DAB was changed to Ibrahim Cardiac Hospital and Research Institute (ICHRI), an institute to provide international standard cardiac surgical services to the people of Bangladesh. Since the beginning of the hospital, the CEO has been M A Mokaddem. Established under the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, the ICHRI provides quality cardiac surgical care right here in Bangladesh. Set up originally, with the help of the Bangladeshi government with some technical assistance from a Swedish organisation, it complements the state's objective of making expensive health care affordable to underprivileged people of Bangladesh. The people are benefited in many ways. Patients are saved from the strain and financial burden of going abroad and also have the benefit of being treated in their own country where they can communicate easily with their doctors.

The main departments in any cardiac hospital are the cardiology and cardiac surgery departments. At ICHRI, both the departments are of international standard and are equipped to handle all kinds of heart complications. According to Dr Masoom Siraj, Senior Consultant Cardiac Surgeon and the Head of the Centre, "in case of adult cardiac surgery, the bulk of the workload is bypass surgery and valve resection surgery. These two are our main concerns." On a limited scale, paediatric surgery is also done here.

The forms of Adult Cardiac Surgical Procedures that are performed include Coronary Artery Bypass Grafts (CABG), Aortic valve Surgery, Mitral valve surgery, Tricuspid valve surgery, Combined procedures and many others.

ICHRI will soon provide paediatric cardiac surgical service on a full scale with all the facilities comparable to



ICHRI is suitably located beside BIRDEM so it can get assistance from a multi-disciplinary hospital.



Khair Hossain, 24 hours after undergoing a cardiac surgery.