

Operation Smile to cure 100 children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anowara Begum, mother of a six-month old baby girl with cleft lip, anxiously waits in front of a screening room of a private hospital where a medical team is conducting free surgery for such children with facial deformities.

The little girl Swapna, with 150 such children, awaits the team to select 100 children for the free surgery this year at Care Hospital. Earlier on January 2010, they conducted the surgery on 86 patients at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

"I was not worried when I saw one of my twins born with cleft lip, but my family members and neighbours panicked and said if this girl is not



Dr Vincent Yeow, second from left; Prof Parveen Fatima, centre; Nurur Rahman Khan, second from right; and Shahnaz Faiz, extreme right; at a press conference in Care Hospital at Lalmatia in the city yesterday.

cured, she will become a burden for the whole family," said Anowara.

The 48-members medical team from Operation Smile, a worldwide children's medical charity, will perform surgery on children with correctable facial deformities. Brac is a partner of this mission.

Team leader Dr Vincent Yeow, vice-chairman of Operation Smile Singapore, said, "We would start surgery from tomorrow (Monday) and today will be spent selecting patients."

The team comprises of doctors, speech therapists, nurses and coun-

sellors from Canada, Singapore, India, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Italy, the USA, the UK and three from Bangladesh.

At least 5,000 to 10,000 children are born in Bangladesh annually with cleft lip and palate, said Shahnaz Faiz, founder of Operation Smile (Bangladesh).

Marking the event, a press conference was organised by Operation Smile, Bangladesh chapter, at Care Hospital.

Care Hospital Managing Director Prof Parveen Fatima, Brac Programme Manager (health) Solaiman Sarker, Operation Smile (Bangladesh) Vice Chairman Nurur Rahman Khan and BSMMU Treasurer Prof M Moazzem Hossain attended the briefing.

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