

South Asian cardiologists meet to build network

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangla-speaking cardiologists of South Asian region yesterday organised an international conference on interventional cardiology in Dhaka to build a network that would enhance expertise of specialist physicians and help patients get quality treatment.

Dr Afzalur Rahman, course director of the conference, said this network will create scopes for young doctors to share their views and knowledge with the world-renowned cardiologists to boost skills.

According to a study of the World Bank, people across South Asia including Bangladesh, West Bengal, Assam, and Tripura are at risk of heart attack or coronary artery disease at rates four times higher than any other race in the world, he said.

Dr Rahman was speaking at a brief news conference before the international conference titled "Bangla Interventional Therapeutics (BIT)-2011" went into sessions at a city hotel yesterday.

He also said the platform will significantly contribute to prevent and control cardiovascular diseases by creating awareness in this region where lack of alertness worsened the situation even further.

Cardiologist Dr Rabin Chakraborty, a course director from India, said the conference gives participant doctors opportunity for face-to-face engagement to learn and share the updates, breakthroughs, and solutions to interventional cardiology and develop a common protocol.

The daylong international conference was attended by over 200 cardiologists from Bangladesh, India, and Singapore.



PHOTO: STAR

Prof Anisuzzaman inaugurates National HSBC-Prothom Alo Bhasha Protijog (language competition) 2011 at Viqarunnisa Noon School and College in the city yesterday.

Road blocked as trader killed in city road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A furniture trader was crushed under the wheels of a bus requisitioned by police at Kachukhet in city's Kafrul yesterday.

The deceased is identified as Tajul Islam, 52, owner of Barisal Furniture in Kachukhet area.

Witness Mofizullah said Tazul was ran over by the bus at Kachukhet Bazar while he was trying to cross the road to reach his shop at about 9:30am.

The bus with policemen on board was heading towards Paltan from police line at Mirpur, Section-14.

Locals blocked the road for around an hour following the incident causing traffic jam in the area.

The agitating people lifted the blockade at about 10:30am after police assured them of punishment to the driver after arresting him, who escaped the scene immediately after the accident.

War crimes witnesses to get safety: Qamrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will protect the witnesses to war crimes committed during the liberation war in 1971, State Minister for Law Qamrul Islam said yesterday.

"We will take every steps necessary, including formulating law, to ensure security to the witnesses of war crimes, as the accused criminals are organised now and trying to foil the trial by threatening the witnesses," he said.

"We are preparing the draft of witness protection law which might be placed in the parliament in the next session."

"We have to ensure that those who were victim of sexual violence during the liberation war do not fall victim to social harassment, and the government will ensure that," he added.

The state minister said these to reporters after attending the inaugural session of a roundtable on "Accountability of sexual

violence of 1971 and Bangladesh trial" at Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday.

The roundtable was jointly organised by Liberation War Museum and Allard K Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic of Yale Law School, USA.

Qamrul said the war crimes trial in the country would be up to the international standards, and it would not be a camera trial.

The government must ensure justice to the victims of sexual violence and ensure that they can speak in the court without hesitation, said Mofidul Haque, trustee of Liberation War Museum.

Chief Prosecutor of International Crimes Tribunal, Golam Arif Tipu, said they are giving the safety of the witnesses of sexual violence to women top priority.

Currently five top Jamaat-e-Islami leaders and two BNP leaders are behind the bars, who face charges of crimes against humanity in 1971.

TRAPPED IN SHIP CONTAINER

Alamin buried in distant land without tears

PORIMOL PALMA

None was there to shed a tear when Alamin Ujha, one of the two Bangladeshi men who died while accidentally being shipped to Singapore on a container from Chittagong Port a month ago, was buried in a foreign land.

Instead of family members, some Bangladeshi officials and kind Singaporeans attended the sad funeral at Choa Chu Kang Muslim Cemetery in Singapore on Thursday. Even Din Islam, who was trapped with Alamin, could not see the burial.

Bangladesh authorities took no responsibility to repatriate Alamin's corpse while his family was too poor to pay for his repatriation.

"The government said we have to pay to repatriate our brother from Singapore. But we are very poor. We could not bring our brother," Alamgir, Alamin's brother and a rickshaw-puller, told The Daily Star from Chittagong yesterday.

"My elderly mother cries like a madwoman, as she could not see her son's body," Alamgir said, adding that they had no way other than agreeing to the government proposal of a burial in Singapore.

He said a Bangladeshi journalist in Singapore assured to provide a photo of Alamin. "That is what we can keep to remember him," he said.

A Bangladeshi journalist AKM Mohsin based in Singapore, who followed the incidents, said, "How funny! How could a poor family bear the cost?"

Bangladesh High Commission told Singapore media that Alamin's corpse could not be sent home, as it had decomposed, he said, adding, "Everyone in Singapore is laughing about it."

Many Bangladeshis wanted to pay the repatriation cost of Alamin's body, but the high commission never asked for any help, he said.

Alamin, 37, and his colleague Din, two port cleaners, had smoked marijuana in the empty container before being locked in. They shouted and banged on the walls of the container to attract attention before it was hoisted onto the ship Hansa Caledo. But no help came.

Alamin died two days after the ship set sail on April 2. Din survived nine days trapped without food or water. Port workers in Singapore discovered Alamin's rotting corpse and Din in critical condition on April 10.

The body was taken to Singapore General Hospital while, after treatment, Transient Workers Count Too, a charity for migrants in Singapore, took care of Din.

Din at that time had mistakenly named Alamin as Alamgir to The Daily Star.

By this time, Bangladesh High Commission in Singapore had written to the foreign ministry in Dhaka.

An official at the expatriates' welfare ministry said the ministry considered it was not its responsibility to repatriate the dead body as the two did not go to Singapore to work.

He said the men were port workers and so the shipping ministry was responsibility for their repatriation, which unfortunately did not happen.

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