woman didn't even know that such treatment was available in her district itself," exclaims Dr Sen.

People need to be made aware of the fact that there are burn units in their districts, says Dr Sen. It's unacceptable that people from Rangpur have to come all the way to Dhaka for treatment. The first 24 hours after a victim incurs burns are the 'golden hours', as they are the most crucial to a person's life. It'll be difficult for doctors to treat them afterwards, if they don't get the right treatment within those hours, says Dr Sen.

He further adds that the doctors and administration of units of each district should pass on the message and aware people of the existence of a burn unit within their area. Knowing that they will get the same kind of treatment in a hospital nearer their town as they would at DMCH is bound to increase the confidence of victims and their families and maybe even save many lives, says Dr Sen.



The original Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit team of DMCH.

Doctors should enter this profession with a feeling of devotion and sacrifice, as otherwise they'll never be able to give their patients the treatment they deserve, says Dr Sen. Citing the example of Dr Ashrafuzzaman, an Associate Professor of the burn unit who has been with the hospital for over 25 years, Dr Sen says that doctors need to have a commitment that prevents them from running after money.

"I couldn't bring people's confidence in our wing in just a day, it took me years. There weren't many people supporting us when we started this project but now people all over the country know me. I tell everyone that I didn't attain this position in just a day, it took me a lifetime of hard work, which is why I'm known all over the country," says the doctor.

Stressing the importance of prevention, Dr Ahmed says that it's important to raise awareness among people on how to avert domestic fire accidents. By simply tying their sari's anchal around their waist or making sure that they don't go too near the fire, people can escape the fate of being a fire victim, says Dr Imran.

"When I went on a training to Bangkok, I was surprised to see that they had only one patient admitted in the six-bedded burn wing of the hospital. I even suggested that they should come over to our country to see how overcrowded our hospitals can get but they declined the offering, stating that they would not be able to handle such a scene if they encountered it on a daily basis," says Islam.

As the wing is overflowing with burn victims, especially since the brutal fire attacks on people during hartals, patients can be seen lying patiently, without complaint on the grounds with their attendants and family members sitting beside them. But this is far from an ideal situation, says Dr Sen.

"These are burn victims and their injuries are extremely sensitive and vulnerable. But they have to lie on the bare ground because of a lack of space and unfortunately, there's very little that we can do about this. However, we are planning to turn this unit into an institute. At the present we have around 25-30 plastic surgeons in the country but we need over 500 surgeons who are ready to commit themselves in treating these traumatized victims," says Sen.

Dr Sen also argue that there should be a good burn unit in every medical college, as that would help reduce the pressure on the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of DMCH. He also says that doctors should practice in places out of Dhaka, as only then will we able to improve the medical treatment facility of our country. Moreover, he adds, it would prove to be more economically and financially viable, as patients in the capital city are wont to seek treatment from senior doctors rather than go to fresh graduates. Setting up a temporary practice would work wonders for their reputation as well as increase the number of patients visiting them.

"When I used to work in villages, there were no cell phones, cars or other luxuries that would improve our stay in those places. I used to travel by boat! Now you have the whole world in your hands. What prevents our young doctors from practicing in villages and other towns now?"

In a scenario where the medical profession is often accused of blatant commercialism and putting financial gain above patient's wellbeing doctors like Dr Sen and his team give us inspiration. They are individuals with incredible courage and superhuman perseverance that drive them to help patients with the worst possible injuries and save their lives. ■