

A small initiative bringing a big difference



TAHMINA MOSTAFA, Director, Meghna Group of Industries (MGI)

Cancer cases are on the rise in Bangladesh and it is one of the main causes of increased mortality rates. To battle this unpleasant scenario, MGI has joined hands with Bangladesh Cancer Aid Trust (BANCAT) which is an association that helps individuals fight against cancer.

The high cost of cancer treatment has financially afflicted many families. This is why MGI comes forward with an initiative titled Warriors Club. Warriors Club, getting launched by BANCAT, is an initiative that supports the survival of cancer patients in their unpleasant fight against cancer by providing mental support throughout the whole process.

It is an immense pleasure for MGI and Super Fresh Drinking Water to work along side BANCAT in helping cancer survivors. This small step may help the survivors get closer to achieving their dreams as well as uplift their spirits in the middle of a dreary battle with cancer. It is our privilege to support this initiative. Together, we can and we will strive.

An ordinary man with an extraordinary story

After conquering acute myeloid leukemia, Najmus Ahmed Albab started a cancer aid trust for his countrymen

SUPPLEMENT DESK

It started out as a high fever that would not subside. So, Mr. Najmus Ahmed's family had him admitted to a hospital in Bangladesh. Thinking it was just dengue, he remained optimistic. But a few days later, in March 2011, he was transferred to Parkway Cancer Centre (PCC) in Singapore.

He awoke in a haematology ward and he said recalling, "I was clueless when I met Dr. Teo. But he informed me that I had the 'best' type of leukemia possible as it was the most treatable."

It was only after his first round of chemotherapy that reality sank in. "It finally hit me," he said. "I had leukemia. It was a shock." But Dr. Teo allayed his fears. "Dr. Teo was very open with me. He told me I was strong and that I could fight it. He said at 45 years of age, I would probably survive," Mr. Ahmed shared.

Although his treatment was going smoothly, it was not without side effects. The drugs also caused insomnia. He had depression midway through the treatment, but with the support of his son and his father, both of whom had travelled to Singapore to accompany him for the duration of his treatment, Mr. Ahmed pulled through. In fact, their support was so invaluable that he wrote a book about it – titled When Time Stops – where Mr. Ahmed talks about his heartfelt gratitude for his family's support and the fact that cancer can be beaten.

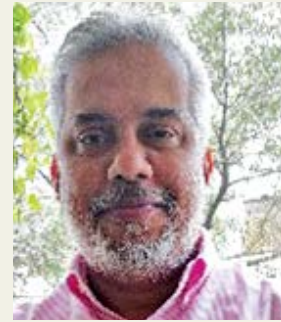
When his chemotherapy concluded in August 2011, Mr. Ahmed returned to Bangladesh. Taking the advice of Dr. Teo to lead a less stressful life, he left his previous job in a manufacturing firm and started his own corporate consulting firm where he is now able to have more relaxed hours.

Driven by a deep desire to see others battle cancer successfully, Mr. Ahmed started I Beat Cancer. What prompted the birth of the initiative was a newspaper clipping he had seen on his flight back to his home country.

"There was a small notice in the newspaper," Mr. Ahmed shared. "A young girl was asking for funds to battle the exact same kind of leukemia I had just recovered from." A deeply spiritual man, he did not take it to be mere coincidence. So he began speaking to friends, asking for donations, and finally, he raised enough money to purchase the drugs the girl required for a year's worth of treatment.

"Now she's married with her first child!" he said.

That's how a cancer survivor turned his weakness into strength and used that strength to help other cancer patients in need. Najmus Ahmed Albab is now the founder and trustee of Bangladesh Cancer Aid Trust (BANCAT).



It Takes One to Save One



SUPPLEMENT DESK

Buoyed by his first attempt of supporting a leukemic patient in need of funds, Mr. Najmus Ahmed Albab lobbied harder for more donations and turned this personal initiative into a foundation, the Bangladesh Cancer Aid Foundation (BANCAF), in 2011.

As the foundation's impact on the society grew bigger and greater, Mr. Ahmed realised that it needs to be turned into a formal organisation and accordingly, the foundation was legalised as a trust and Bangladesh Cancer Aid Trust (BANCAT) was born in 2019.

BANCAT is a nationwide, community-based, voluntary organisation dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by prevention and diminishing suffering through education, advocacy, and service. Mr. Ahmed brought 14 other like-minded individuals on-board as trustees, many of whom had been indirectly affected by cancer. BANCAT provides financial assistance and emotional support to underserved cancer patients of society. It also works towards raising awareness about cancer through a variety of social activities at different levels of society. Some of these activities include Cricket for Cancer, walkathon, cancer awareness campaigns, and cancer screenings.

As of 2020, BANCAT has served more than 200 patients with BDT 10 million, supported by over 100 individuals and organisations. The movement has been possible by the 200 volunteers who work uncompromisingly in the fight against cancer and has given hope to the people in need.

People from different walks of life and various business organisations directly help BANCAT to manage and serve its patients



through financial and other assistance.

BANCAT has a patient adoption programme under which an individual/organisation can take responsibility for treating a cancer patient by contributing BDT 10,000/month. The treatment ranges from the patient's doctor visiting fee, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, medicine purchase, hospital admission to operation and such. BANCAT keeps the donors posted about the patient's updates on a monthly basis.

BANCAT acts as a bridge between the affluent and underserved people of the society, working tirelessly and relentlessly to prevent cancer.

If you know of any cancer patient in need of support, contact BANCAT at +8801938830002.

To support cancer patients in need kindly forward your contribution to: bKash: +8801612226223 (Merchant Account)

BANCAT - Bank Asia, Scotia Branch Account Number: 00733004894
BANCAT - Prime Bank, Banani Branch Account Number: 2132111021363



BANCAT Cricket for Cancer



BANCAT Eid Meet



BANCAT Inauguration



BANCAT Winter Smile

Sukhi's Fight to Win Her 'Sukhi' Life Back

Sukhi, aged 30, lives in Kazipara, Barishal. She is a housewife and her husband is a tailor master in the village. Sukhi's life was 'sukhi' until she figured that she was experiencing mild fever every now and then.

Coming from a humble background, Sukhi initially didn't pay much heed to the recurring fever, considering it to be just generic random fever. Within six months, Sukhi started feeling irritation on her



breast skin. This became alarming when she started feeling pain on her right breast. That's when she went to Barishal Medical College for a check-up.

The doctor suggested a mammogram which clearly showed that Sukhi had a tumour in her right breast. They operated on the tumour and it appeared to have cancerous cells indicating stage one breast cancer.

A devastated Sukhi came back home baffled,

wondering how she will manage her family of three children and husband with the illness or whether she will even survive the deadly disease.

Right after finding out about the cancer, Sukhi's middle child fell ill as well. Upon medical examination, it was discovered that Sukhi had an autoimmune thyroid disease which was passed on to her children, making her children's chances of survival very slim. She lost her middle child in this battle.

But Sukhi didn't give up. She continued her treatment.

Cancer treatment is expensive and Sukhi's family was running out of the financial means to support her treatment. In those dark times, one of her relatives took her to Mr. Najmus Ahmed Albab, founder of Bangladesh Cancer Aid Trust (BANCAT), seeking his support.

BANCAT financially assisted Sukhi for a year for her radiotherapy at National Institute of Cancer Research & Hospital (NICRH) and also provided mental support to help her cope with all the unforeseen incidents she was going through.

The cancer cells never came back and today, Sukhi volunteers to raise awareness about breast cancer in her neighbourhood. She believes that every one of us is susceptible to cancer and maintaining a healthy lifestyle and being aware of cancer is the only way to fight it.



The fall that turned her life upside down

Sharmin, aged 16, lives in Mymensingh and is the only daughter of her farmer father, Abdus Samad.

Sharmin is the beloved sister of her five brothers. One day, when she was in Grade nine, Sharmin slipped on mud and hurt her waist badly. After a week, the pain was gone and Sharmin was fine. After a month however, the pain came back with higher intensity and swelling.

The wound didn't heal internally and resurfaced with pus. The local doctors operated and cleaned the wound but the pus kept on coming back. At one point no one was willing to clean her wound anymore and her brother, Jahangir, used to do it for her. The wound reached her pelvic bone



and Sharmin got diagnosed with Ewing sarcoma.

Ewing sarcoma is a rare type of cancer that occurs in bones or in the soft tissues around the bones. Her father did not have the means to treat his daughter's expensive illness. Bangladesh Cancer Aid Trust (BANCAT) came to their assistance. Sharmin got treatment for a year at National Institute of Cancer Research & Hospital (NICRH) and was cured completely.

Sharmin appeared for her SSC examination in 2019 and passed with a CGPA of 4.28.