

# **HUMANITARIAN WORK AT EARTHQUAKE DEVASTATED NEPAL**

## **REPORT OF THE PILOT TEAM SPECIALIST DOCTORS / PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS**

Representing Medical professional across the country Dr. Ashok Gupta, was deeply concerned about the loss of human life and despair following the natural calamity that took place in Nepal. Several hundred had died and thousands have been injured. This is a very sad event and we being doctors desire to relieve the pains of the affected. A call for humanity and our medical ethic always remind us to help those who are in tremendous pain.

Dr. Ashok Gupta in consultations with the Indian Medical Association (HQs) and the Disaster Management Cell of the Indian Medical Association (HQs), volunteered to lead a team of Specialist Doctors / Primary Care Physicians to treat the injured and save the life of affected. As was reported in several press / News papers;

A 13-member team of doctors, associated with the Indian Medical Association, on Wednesday returned from its humanitarian expedition to quake-hit Nepal. The team has spent seven days in Nepalese capital Kathmandu, treating about 800 patients with various complaints. Speaking with Dr. Lohani, Chief, Curative Service Division “It’s a very great thing that in our time of difficulty, all countries came ahead and helped us. We are really thankful to them. Now the foreign medical teams can go back to their countries. If we need any kind of help in future, definitely we will contact them,” Lohani added.

During personal interactions with some of the officials, it is reported that tremors and aftershocks have remained the most dreadful episodes happening every day. Since the day of the Major Earth Quake, so far there had been over 160 Major Tremors (above the 4 R Scale) and over 680 Minor Tremors (below the 4 R Scale). Although the life is gradually returning to normal, but some of the most affected areas are still cut off and not accessible. While travelling around the city and the remote areas, every corner / part of the city is still painted with the memories of the devastation.



**Inside Office on 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, damaged walls, stairs, furniture**



**On the Street and several spots in the City of Kathmandu**

Please find the detailed progress Report:

1. Day One : 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015:
  - a. Arrival at Kathmandu International Airport
  - b. Informal Introduction of the members of the Team
  - c. Visit to the Office of the Director, Ministry of Health and Population, Government of the Nepal
  - d. Discussions with the Officials of the concerned sections of the Ministry of Health and Population / WHO for registration of Foreign Medical Teams, planning to respond to 2015 Kathmandu Valley Earthquake.



- e. Visit to the related Hospitals as suggested by the Director, Ministry of Health and Population, Government of the Nepal.
- f. Formal meeting and briefing of the action plans for the following days
- g. To complete the formalities as well to submit the self-attested documents for issue of the Authority Letter / ID for members ; Foreign Medical Teams

Day Two 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015 (International Labour Day) Public Holiday:

Dr. Ashok Gupta paid a visit to the Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital, the largest post graduate teaching hospital of Nepal and met the Executive Director Prof. Dr. Deepak Prakash Mahara, through the courtesy of Prof. Dr. Ishwar Lohani, Ex Director of the Hospital and the Head of the Department of Plastic Surgery. Professor of Anaesthesiology also joined in the discussions:

- IMA (HQs) is keen to support the specialized treatment for patients affected by the Earth Quake either at Nepal or at India
- IMA can provide the necessary technical support, manpower as well the supplies needed for such specialized treatment.
- IMA will be happy to support the advanced specialized treatment at select hospitals in India for the victims of the Earth Quake.

Prof. Dr. Deepak Prakash Mahara, Prof. Dr. Ishwar Lohani and Professor of Anaesthesiology were very appreciative of the gesture of the IMA and did mention that although, they have successfully tackled all the injured at the hospital, but definitely need help / expertise, when additional load of patients arrive at the hospital. It was suggested to form a Sub-committee to assess the patients needing advanced specialized treatment and on the recommendations of the Sub-committee, would be sending the details to IMA (HQs).

Prof. Dr. Ishwar Lohani then showed me some of the patients of earth quake being treated at the department of Plastic Surgery, wherein microsurgical free flap transfer, replantation, cranio facial surgery etc. were carried out. I was further introduced to Post Graduate students in the department as well other members of the teaching staff.

Dr. Ashok Gupta, advised all the members of the team to fill up the Ministry of Health Form for FMT along with the auto attested copies of State Medical Council Registration and the University degree certificate + Photo ID, to be submitted to MOH / Nepal Medical Council.

**TeamB:led by Dr. Kanchan Gupta:**

- Proceeded to a distant Medical Relief Site at Ranipurin association with the Designate Hospital
- Temporary Medical Centre was established and OPD started.
- Volunteers from the host hospital and region made several rounds in the region and made announcements using PAC
- Over 340 patients of different age group attended the OPD and were duly accorded medical / surgical help



**Remote OPD Session around 70 Kms. three hours by road from Kathmandu. Examined over 325 patients at one of the worst-hit districts, mostly old ladies and children, despite scores of angry villagers blocked the road with tires capital city.**

**The government was struggling to fully assess the devastation wrought by 7.8 magnitude quake. This was a disaster on an unprecedented scale. Almost 10,350 were injured**

**Team A, led by Dr. Ashok Gupta,** reviewed the hospital infrastructure, OT set up, ICU back up and interaction with the Authorities at the Designate Hospital;

- a. Visit and assessment of the patients admitted in the hospital following the major earthquake and needing specialized treatment
- b. Over 34 patients of different age group were admitted in the hospital and were attended immediately by the in house staff of the hospital.
- c. About 4 patients of major poly trauma needed further immediate surgical intervention and were attended by respective specialists.



It has fully equipped OTs, ICU, ICCU, Cath Lab and In House / On call Visiting Specialists to attend to needs of the patients.

In collaborations with the hospital staff and the Ministry of Health, Indian Embassy, the Team extended all the technical support. There were over 4 patients, needing immediate surgical intervention and posted for joint discussions and planning.

d. Patient 1:

- i. # Both Bones Lower Limb (R + L) + Distal vascular compromise+ ??Gas Gangrene
- ii. Blunt injury Chest / Abdomen + Cerebral Contusion



In association with the treating Orthopaedic Surgeon Dr. Shashank Shringarpure (Plastic Surgeon) and Dr. Adsul (Anaesthesiologist) helped in extensive wound debridement and removal of all the doubtful areas of skin + soft tissue. The patient was followed up by change of dressings at Bed Side on following days. The patient needed repeated debridement and a free flap reconstruction.

Through the office of the Indian Embassy, Dr. Thakur, Health Attaché / In-charge of shortlisting seriously injured patients to be air lifted to India, visited the hospital along with Dr. Ashok Gupta and after discussions with the hospital authorities and the patients relatives, it was left to the patient to choose the options of further treatment either at the same Hospital in Kathmandu or come to India. I had suggested that 10 – 15 days course of hyperbaric oxygen therapy would be of a great help in final outcome and as the treatment options of hyperbaric oxygen therapy is available at Mumbai, she is welcome to come to the Bombay Hospital. As per the advice of the Medical Director, Bombay Hospital & Medical Research Centre, she would be extended all the support at the Hospital.

There were several other patients requiring specialized / critical treatment and were being well looked after at the hospital.



2. Day Three 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2015 (Saturday) Public Holiday: Remote OPD at Kirtipur

**Team led by Dr. Ashok Gupta along with Dr. Kanchan Gupta, Dr. Sujit Adsul and Dr. Shashank Shringarpure:**

- a. Proceeded to a distant Medical Relief Site at Charagadh village Kirtipur District in association with the Designate Hospital
- b. Temporary Medical Centre was established at Temple and OPD started.
- c. Volunteers from the Designate Hospital and the region made several rounds in the region and made announcements using PAC
- d. Over 190 patients of different age group attended the OPD and were duly accorded medical / surgical help



**Remote OPD Session around 100 Kms. from Kathmandu  
Examined over 525 patients, mostly elders and children**

3. Day Four 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2015 (Sunday): Remote OPD at Sindhupal Chouk; Team of **Dr. Gupta, and Dr. S. Shringarpure**:
- Proceeded to the worst affected area of Raanitar in Sindhupal Chouk to set up Medical Relief OPD in association with Mr. Ashok Tibrewal, heading a Local NGO
  - Temporary Medical Centre established at Temple for OPD.
  - Volunteers from the NGO / Business House and the region made rounds and made announcements using PAC
  - Over 260 patients of different age group attended the OPD and were duly accorded medical / surgical help



**Remote Session around 120 Kms from Kathmandu  
Examined over 725 patients, mostly elders and children**

Thereafter, Dr. Ashok Gupta visited the Indian Embassy at Kathmandu and met H E Mr. Ranjeet Ree, Ambassador of India, First Secretary and Dr. Thakur, Health Attaché and provided details of the activities being undertaken by the IMA Team of Specialists.



On the advice of Hon'ble Mr. Ranjeet Ree, Ambassador of India, Dr. Thakur, Health Attaché and Dr. Ashok Gupta along with Specialist Anaesthesiologist visited two of the hospitals to assess the feasibility of Air lifting some of the critically injured patients.

- IMA (HQs) is keen to support the specialized treatment for patients affected by the Earth Quake either at Nepal or at India
- IMA can provide the necessary technical support, manpower as well the supplies needed for such specialized treatment.
- IMA will be happy to support the advanced specialized treatment at select hospitals in India for the victims of the Earth Quake.



Government of Nepal Ministry of Health and Population IDENTITY CARD FOR DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM	
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Contact no.	9851135704
Deployed district	SHARDAKATHMANDU
Signature of card holder	Signature of authority

There was a social get together of some of the Leading members of the Indian Community, NGOs from Nepal involved in relief work, officials of the Indian Embassy and chief of NDRF team. Dr. Ashok Gupta and Dr. Kanchan Gupta were also invited to join.

### Day Five 4<sup>th</sup> May 2015 (Monday):

- Dr. Thakur, Health Attaché along with Dr. Ashok Gupta visited two of the hospitals to assess the condition of the patients:
  - At Norvic International Hospital: An Indian Mountaineer, injured during an avalanche, had severe head injury and was kept on life support system. Craniotomy was performed and was showing signs of improvements, but was not responding to verbal commands.
  - Following discussions with the treating doctors and the relatives of the patient, it was suggested to delay the shifting of the patient for a few more days, until he shows signs of further improvements.
  - It was suggested to perform tracheostomy.



- At Vayodha Hospital: An Indian female aged around 45 years, injured during an earth quake, had extensive poly-trauma with multiple fractures both legs + Foot with extensive soft tissue damage + impending gangrene.
- She was kept ICU and was being provided needed treatment and was showing signs of improvements, but needed multiple procedures including microsurgical reconstructions.
- In consultations with her husband and two nephew (Practicing as doctors at Jaipur), it was suggested to shift her at the desire of the patient either to Jaipur, Delhi / Mumbai for further multiple orthopaedic / plastic surgical procedures including microsurgical reconstructions.
- Dr. Kanchan Gupta and Dr. Shashank Shringarpure visited the Remote OPD under the banner of Red Cross and examined over 100 patients.

- Dr. Thakur, Health Attaché advised Dr. Ashok Gupta to visit the Trauma Centre and the Bir Hospital and to meet the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Dr. Ganesh Gurung. Dr. Ashok Gupta visited the Trauma Centre and interacted with Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Dr. Ganesh Gurung and other members of the medical team of the Hospital. Dr. Gupta was also invited to take a lecture on Reconstructive Microsurgery for Post Graduate students the next day.



## NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES



#### 4. Day Six 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015 (Tuesday):

- Dr. Sujit Adsul and Dr. Shashank Shringarpure visited the Remote OPD under the banner of RED Cross and the B P Eye Foundation at Karyabinayak Municipality area and examined over 70 patients.
- Dr. Ashok Gupta took a lecture on Reconstructive Microsurgery for Post Graduate students. It was attended by over 40 orthopaedic / trauma surgeons / plastic surgeon at the Trauma centre.
- There were lots of interactions and they appreciated the advancements in reconstructive microsurgery in trauma care / salvage of limbs.



- Dr. Ashok Gupta, then visited the Ministry of Health to seek permission of the members of the IMA team arriving later.
- It was extremely difficult, as the Ministry had stopped any new registrations and were advising all the relief teams to go back. However, as a goodwill, Dr. Lohani, suggested the team to go to the Bhaktapur Civil Hospital.



Dr. Ashok Gupta  
IMA Team Leader  
Nepal Disaster Relief Team