Relief Activity by Baqai Medical University Team at Earthquake Areas

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Earthquake created a disaster and national emergency in recent past. Medical units from all over the country stood side by side to withstand the need of the time.

Baqai Medical University quickly responded to the task and their medical personels reached the affected areas within 36 hours of the incident.

I along with main team comprising of general surgeon, neurosurgeon, maxillofacial surgeon, medics, and paramedics and other personels of Baqai Medical University reached the affected site on 4th day. We reached the epicenter of earthquake i.e., Muzaffarabad, where under guidance of army a base camp was established and medical relief activity was immediately started. One of the teams, which included myself and a general surgeon, was taken to CHAKOTHI sector (L.O.C.), by helicopter because of unavailability of roads.

Medical facilities at epi-center were very scanty and quality was poor. We started our work with army personels. At Chakothi we were directed to go up at peaks to pockets of residents who were injured and unable to come down at ground level where medical treatment although very much insignificant but so called present. We went up the hill with army personnel on foot, on steep climbing surface with fear of slides. Weather was extremely cold and raining continued.

Camps were established at different peak levels where the residents were stuck, there the medical services were delivered.

Male, female and children almost all of them were injured to some extent. Medical facilities were almost insufficient. Approximately 95% were suffering from soft tissue injuries, approx. 80% had wounds which either needed closure or debridement, 60% needed immobilization of limbs due to fracture or severe soft tissue injuries. Approx. 60% needed minor procedures like wound closure or wound debridement or fasciotomy, and 40% needed fixation of fracture, mostly external fixation because of large contaminated wounds.

We did wound closure with simple cloth provided by natives from collapsed houses, needles were local household cloth needles, finger amputations were done with simple mechanical plas, fasciotomy with simple traditional cloth scissors, and last but not least, interesting scenario was that the bandages were made from KAFAN KA LATTHA.

Response and actions of army was very much inspiring and encouraging. They helped us a lot in delivering our skills. They looked after us, caring more than there own lives. They made an impact on our minds and distinguished place in our heart.

There were no houses left after destruction, we lived at some places in army tents and at some places in open air. We tried to deliver medical services in chakothi to about 700-800 peoples, severely injured were evacuated to secondary and tertiary care centers through army helicopters.

Although army barracks were also completely destroyed with their ammunitions, their clothes and even their rations buried in rubble, but their spirits were very much high. They shared their remaining ration/food with native civilians.

The attitude of native affected people in Chakothi was thanless, non co-operative and sometimes discouraging.

It was the last point or limit of our country and we clearly saw our neighbouring country forces were positioned in front of us, some of us waved as we passed along side their border and they returned same response with good gesture.

We got back to Islamabad in an American helicopter and on the way through helicopter when we looked down the place it was all destroyed, mountains were cut apart like pieces of bread and houses were compressed as some diosaur like living being stepped over it. From Islamabad I, along with general surgeon got back to Karachi while rest of our team were still working in the city of Muzaffarabad.
INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

The Journal of Baqai Medical University is a biannual journal of medical and related sciences published by the Baqai Medical University. The journal is intended as a vehicle for the young medical scientist, research workers as well as senior scholars, for the exchange of information and publication of their research findings.

The manuscript prepared, according to specifications, given below, should be submitted to the Editor, Journal of Baqai Medical University. The Journal will be published twice a year (January and July) and the following categories will be included:

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1. Two complete copies of the manuscript, typed in double space on one side of the paper, with clear margin of atleast one inch on both sides, are to be submitted for consideration. All words that are meant to be italicized should be underlined.

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