

A heart breaking experience and few learning points to share

26<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Village: Teka Mudra, Athasohn, 7 miles from Fenchugonj, Sylhet, Bangladesh

We arrived around 10 am by a 7 sitter from Sylhet town. This is not the first time I have visited this village. 2 patients I intended to see. I was greeted by crowds of villagers who were waiting to receive us from the road.

Soon after I finished seeing my second patient, a small child was brought in by her father asking me to give some advice and treatment. The father started saying that the child was being unwell for 4 days with fever cough and reluctant to eat and drink. They showed me a prescription given by a quack 2 days ago who prescribe paracetamol and anti histamine syrups.

On inspection and basic examination I realized that this baby had possibly bad pneumonia with already signs of early respiratory arrest, the child becoming listless and exhausted, floppy. I spent not a moment advising them to take her to nearest hospital which is 7 mile away from the village.

The baby was rushed to nearest hospital by a motor bike where attending doctors declared her dead. While I was still in the village examining my next patient who has possible cerebral palsy I was given the sad news.

The whole family and the whole community became stand still; everyone started crying, it was a very painful moment of life.

There are many factors why this happened, why this innocent child lost its life, why the parent will now have to live with the saddest memories of their lives.???

1. We need access to basics health services provided by a co ordinated systems such as qualified personnel in right place
2. Early detection and referral systems for prompt action
3. Awareness amongst the general population to seek qualified expert opinion, not depend on ill advise
4. Responsible and answerable systems where people are accountable for their actions
5. Affordable infrastructures
6. Education and counselling

This is only one example but I am aware and sure that there are many more of this saddest stories happening round the clock which are avoidable tragedy of human lives in this modern world, where we spend billions to get access to social networking. We must work toward a global network where such tragedy never gets repeated and no parents have to lives in such a memories ever.