



MORALE BOOSTER A Rotary initiative to distribute teddy bears to young patients with heart problems.

Heart surgeries for lesser privileged

India is now in the middle of a Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) epidemic with over 10 per cent of urban Indians having CAD.

A WHO survey shows that over 1.4 million Indians need critical heart surgery annually.

Currently about 55,000 surgeries are done, largely because the rest cannot afford it. They die a slow painful death. More than 150,000 children are born with congenital heart disease, every year. Only about 5,000 manage to get treated mostly with sponsorships and government aid.

While many of us can rejoice that the most modern cardiac facilities at international competitive rates are available now in Bangalore, it is out of reach of 90 per cent of the people.

Heart surgery is one of the most expensive operations. So it is really difficult for the lesser privileged to afford such costly operations, because many of them cannot afford even the bus fare to reach a big hospital with cardiac facilities. Considering the need and the success in the past in this direction, Needy Heart Foundation and RID 3190 have this year pledged to organise 200 (almost-free) heart surgeries for the needy

poor patients at Manipal and Jayadeva Hospitals. These hospitals are heavily subsidising these surgeries under the Rotary Programme. This year, Rotary Governor Nagendra is focussing in a big way on this Project.

Last month, as many as 30 patients were operated upon successfully. All the 200 heart surgeries are hoped to be completed by July 2010.

Needy Heart Foundation and RID 3190 have by now completed more than 1150 heart surgeries, among the lesser privileged, especially from rural areas.

The Needy Heart Foundation is being run by well placed professionals: doctors, a chartered accountant, an industrialist and a corporate technocrat.

It is a registered Foundation approved by the Govt of India. All donations to NHF have tax exemptions under section 80G of IT rules.

The Rotary Heart Surgery Committee and NHF hope to give every person suffering from heart disease a chance to lead a healthy life.

Those with an annual income of less than Rs 10,000 may contact the President of the nearest Rotary Club.

O P Khanna
(Chairman, Heart Surgery Committee
RID 3190)