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Little boy who made big difference to history of liver transplant

By Subhro Niyogi
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kolkata: Liver transplant is now a routine operation at Apollo Indraprastha Hospital in Delhi. But it wasn't so in 1999, when a six-year-old patient arrived there from Kolkata. Years later, doctors still remember the little boy who made the big difference.

"The liver transplant programme really took off after the successful operation on Soumyadeep Ghosh. He was among the success story that spurred us to take up the complex operation," said Apollo Indraprastha medical director and paediatrician Anupam Sibal.

Sibal recalled the case at a paediatrics' conference in the city. "Soumyadeep was born with biliary atresia, a condition in which there is no connection between intestine and liver, leading to persistence of



jaundice. Though operation is preferred within 60 days, it rarely happens in India. Soumyadeep was brought to Delhi after a late attempt in Kolkata proved partially successful," Sibal said.

The doctor remembers the day when he was wheeled into the operation theatre, critically ill and requiring immediate surgery. "It was October 12, 1999, the very day that a coup had taken place in Pakistan,"

he said. Though the first success had been achieved the previous year when the hospital operated on 18-month-old Sanjay from Kanchipuram, it was Soumyadeep's recovery that gave it hope and courage to take up more cases.

"He is now a school-going kid in Calgary, Canada, and keeps in touch with us. When he grows up, he wants to be a doctor," said Sibal.

In the past five years, the hospital has successfully undertaken 35 transplants. "The surgery gives hope to thousands who suffer from liver malfunctioning. Because the surgery abroad was too expensive at Rs 60 lakh to Rs 1.5 crore," the doctor explained. In comparison, it costs Rs 12-15 lakh in India. Incidentally, the successful transplant on the youngest patient too, is from the city - a month-old girl who had not even been named when she was operated upon.

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Book description won't be published

The publications of the Centre can be viewed as a tool of dissemination of information on different aspects of child labour and its own research findings. Accordingly, publication work has a special place in the activity of the Centre, especially in the context of exponentially growing information on the subject, both at the national and global level. The Centre has brought out a number of publications on different aspects of child labour. Amongst others, these publications include a series on the condition of street children of metropolitan cities and

Pakistani kid gets new lease of life

NAZIYA Alvi and VEECHIKA Agarwal
New Delhi, June 2

THE HAPPINESS of Sajid Mahmood and Iram Akhtar from Pakistan is palpable. Their son, Tayyab, is fit and ready to go home after a successful liver transplant surgery at a hospital here.

The two-and-half-years-old toddler was admitted to the Apollo Hospital three months ago.

"He was a high-risk candidate as he is small built, weak and had jaundice

and a swollen stomach at the time of admission", said Anupam Sibal, a senior consultant at the hospital.

Tayyab suffered from a rare inherited defect called Progressive Familial Intrahepatic Fibrosis in which the normal liver cells on multiplication get replaced by fibrous tissue making the functioning of the liver difficult. The only cure for this rare defect is a liver transplant, which in case of Tayyab was donated by his mother.

The Pakistani couple had more than one reason to choose India over other countries for the surgery. The cost of the surgery being the most important one.

"We earlier planned to go to USA. But the cost there was five to six times more than what it costs in India. Besides, we there would have been visa and cultural problems had we taken the flight to the US", Mahmood said.

Tayyab is returning to his country on Thursday with a healthy liver and a new life to look forward to.



VIRENDRA SINGH/HT
FIT AS FIDDLE: Tayyab with his mother on Thursday.