



Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute and Hospital
Bangladesh

PRESS RELEASE

ROP-caused blindness incidence on the rise

Dhaka, Nov 10: Incidence of blindness caused by Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) -- an abnormal development of retinal blood vessels in premature infants -- is on the rise in Bangladesh.

This was the observation of the speakers at a seminar on ROP held at Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute and Hospital (IIEI&H) at Farmgat in Dhaka today (Monday). They said ROP is emerging as a major health concern in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh government's National Eye Care (NEC), Orbis International, Bangladesh Neonatal Forum (BNF) and IIEI&H jointly organized the seminar.

President of Asia-Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology (APAO) Prof Rajvardhan Azad spoke of the ROP situation in the region at the seminar. Professor and Chair of Pediatric Ophthalmology Division of University of Indonesia Prof Rita S Sitorus and Professor of the same university Risma Kaban shared with the stakeholders the Indonesia's ROP approach and experiences.

Line Director of National Eye Care and Director of National Institute of Ophthalmology and Hospital (NIO&H) Prof Jalal Ahmed spoke at the seminar as the chief guest. Regional Program Director of Orbis Asia and Co-Chair of International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) for South East Asia Dr Abu Raihan and President of BNF Prof Hosne Ara Begum were present at the special guests.

CEO of IIEI&H Dr Michael Hall chaired the inaugural session of the seminar while Country Director of Orbis International, Bangladesh Dr Munir Ahmed delivered the address of welcome.

Prof Jalal said many cases of ROP remain undetected in Bangladesh and sometimes they are detected but are too late to be cured. He said the prevalence of ROP in developing nations has been high giving rise to the number of the blindness there.

Dr Munir said Orbis has adopted a coordinated approach to combat ROP in Bangladesh. He said a committee has been constituted to tackle the phenomenon.

Dr Abu Raihan highlighted the history of Orbis operation and activities in Bangladesh.

The speakers said ROP leads to bleeding and scarring of retina and ultimately to blindness. They recommended taking a comprehensive public health approach, and screening and case detection initiatives, setting standards and guidelines for prevention, screening, treatment and follow-up of the problem, and forging a strategic alliance among ophthalmologists, neonatologists, pediatricians and nurses to combat it.

They laid emphasis on preventive measures, which, they said, is possible by strengthening neonatal intensive care services in Bangladesh.

News Sender

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Photo Caption

Participants at the seminar on ROP held at Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute and Hospital (IIEI&H) in Dhaka on Monday.