MEDICAL NEWS

Health Portfolio 2027

We welcome Hon'ble Narendra Kumar Pradhan as the Minister of Health and Hon'ble Keshab Chandra Gautam as the Assistant Minister for Health.

Do you diagnose your Cancer patients early ?

The Press Release of 24th December 1969 from the WHO Regional Office New Delhi stated that although WHO programmes lay particular emphasis on Control of Cancer by prevention, *early detection of Cancer* was considered so important that it has been made the theme for World Health Day, 7 April, 1970. WHO has set up a research net work headed by an International Reference Centre for the Evaluation of Methods of Diagnosis and Treatment of Breast Cancer at Villejuif with Collaborating Centres in several countries.

The Press Release gives a summary of the report, just published, of WHO Expert Committee on Early Detection of Cancer which met under the chairmanship of Dr. E.C. Easson of Manchester. In order to make Cancer prevention effective, the WHO experts recommend that each country set up a Central Planning Board grouping professional and lay personnel with appropriate skill and experience. "It is worth noting" states the Press Release, "that many physicians are themselves profoundly pessimistic about cancer. Regrettably, they are poorly informed about modern therapeutic methods" (For want of a Radiotherapy unit in Nepal, this "pessimism" and "ignorance" in doctors in Nepal would of course be understandable. —*Editor*)

According to WHO publication, Cancer Research Institutions in India are

Calcutta	:	1 Chittaranjan National Cancer Research Centre
		2 Indian Statistical Institute
Agra	:	Sarojini Naidu Medical College
New Delhi	:	All India Institute for Medical Sciences
Bombay	:	1 Indian Cancer Research Centre
		2 Tata Medical Hospital
Madras	:	Cancer Institute

Education of Nepalese people about Cancer began with an article in "Yeti Pariwar", the first issue of a new Nepali Medical Magazine for laymen edited by Drs. B.P. Sharma, M.R. Baral, Hemang Dixit and Mr. Puru Risal. This successful magazine gives photographs of some authors (doctors) with their names and specialities (Question: Does the Nepal Medical Council consider this as advertising by doctors in magazines for lay people.? For that matter, does the Council consider advertisements by doctors in the newspapers and over the radio as advertisement and does the Council bother if a layman who never saw a Medical School claims to be a qualified doctor and practises as such). The article on "Cancer—early Signs" was by

Anjani Kumar Sharma, Royal Surgeon, which said that Cancer was a disease of aged people and very big and widely spread. Cancer can be removed by operation and the patient gets rid of the disease. The author concluded, "Through this short article I want to make the layman Cancer Conscious. Recently a 34 or 35 year old woman who had discovered a lump in the right breast, came to show it to me in Bir Hospital. When on examination I found signs of Cancer and advised that operation should be carried out soon, she ran away. Even when she came to me again with increasing features of Cancer she did not agree to have operation. Three or four months after that I heard that leaving 3 or 4 little children alone in sorrow she had left this world. If she had received good treatment in time, perhaps she would not have left the world so soon."

The Directorate of Health Services did its best to popularise the theme of this year's World Health Day by inviting doctors to write articles on the theme for the lay people, by offering the services of the Health Education Section of the Directorate in getting the articles published and also by forming a Committee to organise celebrations for the World Health Day this year. Of the articles published in the lay press on this occasion two were in the Kathmandu English Daily "The Rising Nepal" : "Cancer" by Dr. Gurubacharya Pathologist, Central Health Laboratory published on 7th April and "Early Diagnosis of Cancer Saves Life" by Dr. B.B. Baidya, Pathologist, Tri Chandra Military Hospital published on 9th April. Dr. Gurubacharya wrote: Smoking 30 to 40 Cigarettes a day over a few years makes the smoker more likely to suffer from Cancer of lungs than the non smoker we have to discourage or even ban to sell the Cigarette to Children below sixteen years of age..... Cancer of stomach, female genital tract, penis and mouth are common in Nepal.... In Nepal also time has come now to think about smear examination of the female genital tract as a part of family planning. Everybody should have complete health check up at least once a year for early detection of Cancer.....

Dr. Badri Bahadur Vaidya wrote: Cancer as everybody knows starts at one focus and then spreads to other parts of the body. Once it has spread to other parts we are too late to save the person. As for example if a dog gets mad, he cannot do any harm if he is killed before he could bite any body, but once he walks about and starts biting people we are too late. In my short experience as pathologist in this country I have seen that cancer is quite common in Nepal also it appears that we have more incidence of cancer of womb compared to western countries voluntary organisations like Nepal Mahila Sangathan should start a central cytology laboratory in Kathmandu and branches in district.... HMG should provide trained pathologists and technicians and train medical officers and midwives regarding how best to take cervical smear..... slides can be sent to central cytology laboratory for screening.....

JNMA made its contribution to the cancer theme by publishing 12th on February in Vol. 8 No. 1 an article on Cancer in Nepal by B.R. Prasai et al.

The World Health Day itself was celebrated on 7th April 1970 in the following manner. A reception was given in Kathmandu by the WHO Representative for Nepal for a select gathering i.e. most of the doctors, who were involved in early detection of Cancer in Nepal, were not invited. The theme had become vague as the day arrived and the evening approached.