Pakistan Earthquake, October 8, 2005—Experience of 10 Bangladeshi Commonwealth Volunteer Doctors
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On October 8, 2005 at 8:50:38 am there was a massive earthquake in the northern part of Pakistan causing death of more than 87,350 people including many children and wounded over 100,000. The magnitude of earthquake was 7.6 at Richter scale. Many students were buried under collapsed school buildings, many people also trapped in their homes and were sleeping after taking ‘SEHERI’ since it was Ramadan and died and/or injured. It was a huge disaster and Pakistan called for world help along with medical support. Within days Cuban medical team arrived and later from USA, UK, Japan, Australia, Spain, European countries, Middle East and many others joined to serve the medical relief team along with other rehabilitation programs. Commonwealth Secretariat, London selected 10 Bangladeshi doctors to volunteered in their medical team for a period of 6-12 weeks in November 2005. The patients were diverse: fractures, head injuries, skin loss, urethral injuries, perineal injury etc. Doctors had to treat these, counseling the patients & also taking care of daily patients including neonatal resuscitation to caesarian section! Language barrier was an issue. This was a great challenge in minus temperature but rewarding experience. Conclusion: Bangladesh and many countries are in high risk area for earthquake and if any disaster occurs (Allah forgives us), the casualty of highly populated cities would be unthinkable. Are we prepared to handle any such situation? Specialist doctors should be prepared in a coordinated way to provide all sorts of medical service in an emergency situation.