

Chinese diplomatic medical mission

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Madam, the People's Liberation Army Navy deployed a vessel, called Chinese Peace Ark, a hospital ship on a diplomatic medical mission. Since June 2007, the ship is moving around the coastal belts and islands of the various corners of the globe to treat the patients. The ship had provided free of charge medical treatment to the people in Kenya, Tanzania, Djibouti, Seychelles, Indonesia, Myanmar, Cuba, Costa Rica and Jamaica.¹ In June 10, 2013, the ship moved from China's Zhejiang province on a four month journey, visited the Maldives, Brunei, Gulf of Aden, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh.

The only ship of its class has 300 beds hospital, 100 highly qualified physicians, surgeons, 30 medical and surgical units with ICUs, a wide range of diagnostic lab, 8 surgical operating theatres to accommodate 40 surgeries per day, and a rescue helicopter for any emergency. It provides free medical services including diagnostics, out-patient services, specialist's consultation, minor and major surgeries.¹ In Maldives, ship provided services via ten mobile medical sub-teams to eight far-flung islands by its well equipped ship-borne helicopter and boats.² The peace Ark treated an average of 600-700 patients a day, 2500-3000 patients in each country. However, at certain shores the highest single-day outpatient visits reached about 1700 patients with 31 surgical operations.

In addition to all these medical facilities, the ship is providing professional training for local medical and para-

medical staff by conducting seminars and professional discussions for mutual learning and benefits even after the ship leave the costal stations.

I had a chance to call one of the physicians who visited the Peace Ark during its stay in Karachi, Pakistan. The physician said that he was very much impressed by the medical, surgical and lab services they were providing and patients were highly satisfied. He also said that the ship would stay in the harbour for about 6-8 days, but the idea of treating the patients, sharing the knowledge and memories will be long-lasting.

Through this diplomatic medical mission, China markedly improves the image. The Peace Ark ship is a part of the grand strategy of China to win friends in the world and is scoring major public diplomatic victories. I hope, the science community appreciates such efforts provided by any country. The ship based hospital is an excellent model to those who have capabilities to provide humanitarian services to the people across the world.

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