

Leading battlefield surgeon lectures Midland firefighters

Posted: Thursday, March 10, 2011 9:32 pm | Updated: 9:49 pm, Thu Mar 10, 2011.

James Cannon

Midland Reporter-Telegram | [0 comments](#)

The Midland Fire Department gained invaluable training from a leading battlefield emergency responder and surgeon Thursday.

The lecture primarily covered the similarities between what emergency responders fighting a war go through and some of the improvised training and techniques that offer a direct crossover to situations that can arise in day-to-day life as a first responder back home.



Dr. Sudip Bose, a retired major for the Army and current medical director for the Odessa Fire Department, lectured on the altered emergency protocols recently implemented in Odessa and Midland and his experience in battle conditions during the beginning months of the Iraq invasion. He was the first surgeon to treat and assess Saddam Hussein's medical condition after Hussein was discovered in Iraq following the invasion.

Bose's protocols for first responders are being adopted quickly throughout the area and beyond the Permian Basin. He said during every war new medical techniques and procedures are invented or revamped. These new protocols are practical changes from what he learned as one of a handful of battlefield surgeons during the initial invasion, he said.

Bose was stationed in Iraq for 15 months, one of the longest tours of duty for a medical professional in the army, and he saw the front line in Baghdad and Fallujah, among other places.

The biggest lesson he tried to convey was the importance of situational awareness. He recounted a story about a medic who rushed out to save someone's life and was shot. A second medic then ran to help his fallen brother. He also was shot.

"Two dead medics don't help anyone," Bose said during the lecture Thursday afternoon. "Even though the danger is different, the mission is the same: to help others."

Bose also stressed the importance of role awareness. He added that the ability to understand where your part is on an emergency response team and to prep for the following steps ensures the maximum chances of survival.

"Know your role. It's easy to get caught up with your role, but realize what you do or don't do could affect the next step in medical care," Bose said to about 30 MFD firefighters.

Bose said the biggest cause of death in Iraq was the inability to stop bleeding and properly use available resources in a clutch situation to create a makeshift tourniquet. He said that type of injury and quick thinking could directly translate into saving a stabbing or a gun shot victim's life.

He also drew parallels between mass casualty settings on the battlefield to possible domestic situations that could have large body counts. He stressed the need to be able to sort through the victims and to focus on the critically wounded -- those who could be saved -- rather than wasting valuable resources on someone who has little chance of surviving.

The hardest scenes to watch during the video presentation were the battered, bloody pieces of soldiers and civilians. He said this is a fact of life to a medical responder. Although he said stateside responders don't typically see roadside bombs, severe traffic accidents can cause some of the same mangled forms military counterparts saw throughout the war.

"It's really how we react to these horrific scenes that determines the outcome a lot of the time," he said.

© Copyright 2011, Mywesttexas.com, Midland, TX. Powered by Blox CMS from TownNews.com.

HEARST newspapers