

Spring  
2026

# Valerie Taylor Trust

Empowering people with disabilities in Bangladesh

## From the Chairman

**Dear members, supporters and well-wishers of VTT. Spring is in the air and it is time to look forward to brighter and warmer weather after the wet winter. I hope you are all in good health.**

Some of you will be aware that Bangladesh has been through a period of political uncertainty. After seventeen months of unrest, the country now has an elected government in place. Throughout it all, CRP has continued to serve the people of Bangladesh, providing high quality care even in very difficult circumstances.

There is much to celebrate too. A long-held dream of Valerie's has come closer to reality with the establishment of BHPI-Rajshahi, bringing rehabilitation education to the north of the country. And our dedicated volunteers continue to make an enormous difference – Jill Fisher and Glen McGhee both share stories from their latest visits inside.

Here in the UK, with your continued help and support we have been able to keep contributing funds to CRP to support Valerie's vital work. Thank you to every one of you.

I look forward to personally thanking you all at the AGM in May.

**Mokhtar Hussain (Khokon),  
Chairman, Valerie Taylor Trust**

## New X-ray Department Opens at CRP Savar

**In January 2026, Valerie Taylor cut the ribbon to open CRP Savar's new X-ray department. The old department had become too small for the growing number of patients attending daily.**

The new facility has doubled in size and now has two X-ray rooms equipped with up-to-date digital machines. For the first time, CRP Savar can take a full-length image of the spine – a significant advance for diagnosing and treating spinal injuries. The long-term goal is for a CT scanner to be added to the department.

The old X-ray rooms will be transformed into an extended Pathology department later in 2026, allowing that service to treat more patients also.



# Specialist Physiotherapy Training at CRP

## Jill Fisher reports on her eighth visit to CRP

Hello everyone! I'm just back from my eighth four-week visit to CRP, and I'm pleased to share a snapshot of my time there. I specialise in physiotherapy for neurological patients, and heading out to CRP is always such a rewarding experience — I consider myself very privileged to be able to do it.

As ever, the welcome was wonderful. I was once again deeply impressed by the receptivity and interest shown by both the clinical staff and the management team. It really feels as if we're all pushing in the same direction.

CRP is in many ways a victim of its own success: the number of patients wanting to benefit from its services outstrips the available resources, particularly in therapy treatment. I hope that systems may adapt so that all patients accepted for treatment have access to a complete course of therapy — even if shorter than ideal. The longer-term answer, as everyone is aware and working towards, is for expansion of the therapy departments.

## Hands-on Training

My focus, as always, was on the clinical staff. I worked closely with newly qualified physiotherapists, assistants and senior staff in the Neurological Department, Stroke Unit and the Spinal Cord Injuries Unit — essentially, any therapist treating adult neurological patients.

I delivered several training sessions focused on deepening understanding of core treatment principles and giving staff the chance to develop their practical skills through guided hands-on sessions. A new departure for me this year was using video clips of patient treatments. I've always felt a picture is worth a hundred words, and while I've previously done live treatment demonstrations, video felt like a much more time-effective way to draw out specific elements for discussion.



*Practical demonstration with a patient volunteer*

During my visit, I met with Valerie and a patient who wants to set up a peer support group for former stroke patients treated at CRP, to help them maintain contact after discharge. As always, Valerie was incredibly encouraging and supportive of this new initiative.

I also accompanied Valerie to a meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka Central, of which she is an honorary member. The club is hugely supportive of community projects, and the hope is that, together with my own Rotary club in Leeds, we might be able to coordinate efforts to bring a Global Grant to a project at CRP — a very exciting prospect!

## Good Company

Alongside all the work, Shamillee looked after our accommodation needs beautifully and cooked up some wonderful lunches for us volunteers. This time around, I was in good company with Glen McGhee from Scotland and Hanneke Cusell from Denmark, both of whom have an impressive, long history of volunteering at CRP.

It was a brilliant month, filled with hard work, great company, and inspiring people.

I'm already looking forward to my next visit!

## STAFF PROFILE:

# Rubel – Singer, Sportsman, Splint-Maker

**M D Rubelranna, known to everyone as Rubel, is one of the most loved staff members at CRP Savar.**

Born on 14th February 1988 in a small village in Manikganj district, Rubel's early life was shaped by events beyond anyone's control. That year, terrible floods swept through Bangladesh, preventing his parents from taking him to be vaccinated. At nine months old he was struck down with polio, which affected both his legs. He has been unable to walk or bear weight on them since that day, and now uses a wheelchair.

As a child in the village, getting to and from school was a daily struggle — his father had to carry him on his back. He later moved to Savar to live with an uncle and attend secondary school, where he passed his exams. It was then that he began to hear about CRP.

In 2007, Rubel started training as an Assistant Occupational Therapist at the Bangladesh Health Professions Institute at CRP. After completing the two-year course, he joined the hand splinting department, where he has worked ever since — quietly helping patients regain the use of their hands, day after day.

But Rubel's talents extend far beyond the workshop. In 2010 he became involved in CRP's cultural programme as a singer. Since 2012 he has appeared on Bangladeshi television and radio, including talent programmes, and has sung in front of the Prime Minister and other dignitaries. He taught himself to play the harmonium.

His other great passion is sport. He loves playing cricket at CRP's inclusive tournament and has also played in India. He is an accomplished table tennis player too — eight times CRP champion, no less.

In 2014, Rubel met his wife Happi at CRP, where she was caring for her aunt during

rehabilitation. They now have three children: daughters Raisa and Rumi, and son Sayan. In 2020, he completed a three-year Open University bachelor's degree in social science, and he has also completed a peer support training course from Queen's University, Canada, delivered at CRP.

In his spare time, Rubel supervises the gardening in the Bertie Garden for spinal injury patients and helps with their music group.

Rubel says he is deeply happy to be working and living at CRP in the staff quarters with his family. He is grateful to Valerie for founding CRP, loves his fellow workers and patients, and treasures being able to help them have a better life.



# LONG-TERM SUPPORT: Glen McGhee Reports from CRP

Glen McGhee visited CRP from November 2025 to February 2026. Here are some highlights from his time there.

## A Special Appointment

It was a privilege for Valerie and me to be invited to attend an event in Dhaka marking the appointment of Dr Wali Tasar Uddin MBE as Honorary Consul General of Bangladesh to Scotland.

Dr Wali is a long-term supporter of CRP and a friend of Valerie's for nearly fifty years. A successful businessman, he has held fundraising events at his restaurant, Britannia Spice, in Leith, Edinburgh.



*Dr Wali with Valerie and Glen*

## The Twins

Two well-known patients of the Prosthetics and Orthotics department attended the clinic during my visit: ten-year-old identical twins Abdullah and Abdun Rahman. Both boys have cerebral palsy and attend the William and Marie Taylor School at CRP Savar.



*Abdun practicing standing with new orthotics*

Both brothers wear bilateral ankle-foot orthoses (AFOs) to stand, and have done so for several years. They came in for casting because they had outgrown their old AFOs, and returned the following week for fitting and delivery of new ones. Abdullah can walk with his AFOs using a walking frame, while Abdun Rahman uses a standing frame with his.

Both boys are always smiling, very chatty and full of questions. It was a joy to be in clinic with them and their mother.

# MAITS Training Strengthens Support for Children with Disabilities

**Jenny Simpson, MAITS Project Coordinator, reports**

In May 2025, twelve therapists from CRP's sub-centres participated in a six-day training session at CRP's main campus in Savar. The training was conducted by three Level 2 trainers under the supervision of CRP's Master Trainers, Fahmida Banu and Lusana Afrin. The CRP staff will use their new knowledge to develop the skills of Community Health Workers (CHWs); this in turn will empower them to support and advocate for children with disabilities and their families.

Master Trainer Shabnam Rangwala travelled from India to assess whether current Level 2 trainers are ready to progress to Master Trainer level — an important step in strengthening local expertise and ensuring the programme's long-term sustainability.



*Training in progress*

Jenny Simpson visited at the same time to observe the training and also conduct follow-up home visits with six families whose children have cerebral palsy and are receiving ongoing support from CHWs trained through MAITS in December 2024. These visits highlighted the significant impact the CHWs are having on children's development and the wellbeing of their families.

## Hasan's Story

Hasan is a seven-year-old boy with cerebral palsy who attends CRP's school. He lives with his mother and older sister, and the family has been receiving support from a trained CHW.

When the CHW first began working with them, Hasan was unable to grip objects at all. Thanks to regular support and encouragement, he can now brush his hair independently, sit on a toilet with minimal assistance, feed himself dry foods, and even walk short distances unaided. He can sit and hold a pencil without support — an achievement that has significantly boosted both his confidence and independence.

His mother describes the change as life-changing. One of their favourite activities now is writing together — something that had felt impossible before. Hasan's mindset has shifted: he now thinks "I can do that", and he feels more able to take part in classroom activities and learning.

With the continued help of their CHW, the family is now working on further improving Hasan's dressing and toileting skills. The pride and hope in their home is unmistakable.



*Visiting a family alongside a CHW*

# A DREAM REALISED: BHPI Rajshahi Established

For many years, Valerie Taylor has dreamed of establishing a model centre and academic institute in northern Bangladesh, so that people living far from the capital could access rehabilitation services and professional education more easily.

More than 15% of CRP's patients come from the northern part of the country, and many students travel long distances to pursue rehabilitation training.

A significant step came when five acres of land were generously donated to CRP for a new campus in Rajshahi. After three years of extensive planning and consultation, a major milestone was achieved on 26th February 2026: Rajshahi Medical University granted official permission to establish BHPI-Rajshahi.



*Opening Ceremony*

The new institute will offer three undergraduate programmes essential to the rehabilitation sector — Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech & Language Therapy — each with an annual intake of 30 students. By creating opportunities for students to study closer to their home regions, BHPI-Rajshahi will help address the shortage of rehabilitation specialists across the country.

## CRISIS TO CARE:

### CRP's Response to the Milestone Tragedy

**In July 2025, a military jet crashed into Milestone School and College, leaving nearly 40 people dead and 171 injured.**

As Bangladesh's leading rehabilitation organisation, CRP felt a deep responsibility to aid in the rehabilitation of the survivors. A comprehensive team of physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and counsellors provided outreach care over six weeks.

A total of 28 survivors, with burns ranging from 6% to 50% of total body surface area, received rehabilitation support. Physiotherapists provided respiratory training, positioning, scar management, strength and mobility exercises. Occupational therapists supported patients with splinting and training in daily living activities to help them regain independence. Speech and language therapists provided communication and swallowing therapy, while counsellors addressed trauma, sleep disturbances, fear and distress — helping survivors develop coping skills and rebuild hope.

Through every step, CRP stood as a source of support and encouragement. While scars and challenges remain, the survivors are finding courage and renewed belief in life. CRP remains fully committed to their ongoing care.

# BREAKING BARRIERS:

## Wheelchair Martial Arts at CRP

In October 2025, CRP Savar became an unlikely martial arts training ground when it hosted a five-day Wheelchair Adaptive Taijiquan programme. Organised in collaboration with UNESCO's International Centre of Martial Arts, the University of Tennessee and the National Paralympic Committee of Bangladesh, the programme introduced wheelchair users to an adapted form of Tai Chi.

In Bangladesh, opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in structured physical activities remain limited. This programme was designed to show how adaptive martial arts can build strength, improve coordination, develop discipline and strengthen psychological resilience.

Thirty participants took part: 18 people with disabilities, many of them wheelchair users who had previously been treated at CRP, alongside 12 professionals including physiotherapists, sports trainers and representatives from sports organisations. The sessions were led by Dr Zibin Guo and Dr William R. Johnson from the University of Tennessee.

Over the five days, participants practised seven adapted Taijiquan postures, gradually building confidence in their movements. A highlight was a special practice session at the National Martyrs' Monument, where participants demonstrated their newly learned skills in a symbolic national space.

The programme concluded with a certificate-giving ceremony attended by CRP's founder Valerie Taylor. Many participants reported feeling more confident, more motivated to stay active, and inspired by what they had achieved together.



# News in Brief

## Film featuring CRP released Nationwide:

“Watch The Man”, a feature film produced by Humayun Farid and directed by Gazi Rakayet, is being released in major theatres across Bangladesh on 14th April 2026, Bengali New Year. The film features three actors — Rashna Sharmin Kemi, Riyadh and Arif — who live with cerebral palsy in real life, alongside well-known Bangladeshi performers. It features the grounds of CRP, and CRP founder Valerie Taylor appears as a guest artist. The trailer was officially released on 1st March 2026.

**Solar Panels at CRP Mirpur:** An 8 KW solar panel system was installed at CRP Mirpur in Dhaka on 7th December 2025, funded by APL (Bangladesh) Pvt. Ltd. This marks an important step towards environmentally friendly energy generation at CRP.

## CRP Founder receives Shomman Kindness

**Award:** Valerie Taylor was presented with the Shomman Kindness Award at the International Congress on Kindness, Moral Values and Their Impact on Happiness on 20th December 2025. Her daughter Poppy and Jyoti received the award on her behalf.

## The National Wheelchair Basketball

**Championship:** The National Wheelchair Basketball Championship 2025 was held at CRP Savar in September, with 48 para-athletes (32 men and 16 women) competing. CRP Founder Valerie Taylor inaugurated the championship.

A grand prize-giving ceremony followed on the final day.

**New Partnership with Japan:** CRP has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Generous Company Limited (GCL) of Japan to enhance rehabilitation services. The partnership, supported by JICA, will facilitate the exchange of rehabilitation experts and advance rehabilitation research. GCL has generously donated physiotherapy materials to CRP as part of this collaboration.

**BHPI Alumni Reunion:** BHPI hosted its first-ever Alumni Reunion on 21st February 2025, bringing together nearly 1,000 rehabilitation health professionals and guests — a remarkable testament to CRP’s role in building Bangladesh’s rehabilitation workforce.



**CRP Pabna expands:** CRP Pabna – Diabetic Shamity Centre began offering rehabilitation services from its own building on 3rd August 2025.

Located in Pabna town, the centre provides physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and assistive devices to residents of Pabna and nearby districts.

**Rehabilitation Seminar:** CRP hosted a major seminar on rehabilitation health services and assistive technology on 14th October 2025, in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross. More than 300 health professionals, policymakers and international partners attended, generating recommendations for scaling up rehabilitation services across Bangladesh.

## Innovation from CRP's Metal Workshop

CRP's Metal Workshop has developed two new assistive mobility devices aimed at improving independence for people with disabilities.



The first, the **CRP Smart Drive Heavy Duty Power Wheelchair**, is a joystick-controlled electric wheelchair built using locally available materials. Designed for durability and affordability, it can be repaired locally without relying on expensive imported parts.

The second, the **CRP Livelihood Support Smart Wheelchair**, was developed with support from the Akij Monowara Trust. It was specially designed for a paralysed vegetable seller to help him manage his daily business independently — the wheelchair allows him to carry goods and move comfortably while selling, helping him maintain his livelihood with dignity.

CRP also continues to produce a small number of standing wheelchairs — essentially a wheelchair and standing frame combined. At Tk.35,000, these are not cheap, but the benefits are considerable: improved circulation and bone strength, reduced contractures and pressure sores, and greater independence and social interaction.

# Annual Supporters Meeting 2026

## Saturday 9 May 2026

St. Cyprian's Church, Clarence Gate, Glentworth Street, London, NW1 6AX

Curry lunch from 1pm – Meeting starts at 2pm

RSVP: [admin@valerietaylortrust.org](mailto:admin@valerietaylortrust.org) or Tel: 01622 743011

**\*\* PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF VENUE \*\***

## CRP Reaches Out on Mental Health

Mental health remains one of the most stigmatised areas of healthcare in Bangladesh, but CRP is working hard to change that — taking its message directly into the communities that need it most.

The CRP–Rabia Noor Mental Health Day Centre has been at the heart of this effort. In recent months, the centre has organised a series of courtyard meetings in communities around Savar and Manikganj, bringing together local residents to discuss mental health openly — in many cases, for the first time.



At a session in a housing society in Savar, in January 2026, thirty-five participants including the village doctor, imam and local pharmacy shopkeeper joined discussions covering common mental health problems, the importance of early identification and treatment, and the vital supportive role that family and community can play. A further meeting in Sauria, Manikganj, in February, held in collaboration with the local Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPD), attracted more than forty participants of all ages and backgrounds.

Both sessions were well received with participants engaged actively in discussion.

In February 2026, students from the M.Sc. in Rehabilitation Science programme visited the centre to observe its psychosocial interventions, occupational therapy activities and client engagement programmes first-hand — gaining valuable practical experience in community-based mental health care.

Together, these initiatives reflect CRP's growing commitment to ensuring that mental health is treated not as a source of shame, but as an essential part of rehabilitation and wellbeing.

# WAYS YOU CAN HELP

The disabled poor in Bangladesh continue to need help. The Valerie Taylor Trust supports the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed. This is the only place in the country where the paralysed are given specialist treatment – free of charge for the very poorest.

## Support our work by:

- Regular donations by completing the back page of this newsletter – our preferred method.
- Donate on-line to our bank, details overleaf, or via [www.valerietaylortrust.org](http://www.valerietaylortrust.org), [www.paypal.co.uk](http://www.paypal.co.uk) or [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com).
- Please register your donations for Gift Aid if this is applicable.
- Make a legacy. All sizes of donations are valuable and are tax-free. Please ask for our leaflet.

## Administration

We keep administration costs to a low 2-3% of income. However, as postage costs increase, we want to make maximum use of email. Please tick the following boxes as appropriate:

- I am happy to receive routine correspondence by email
- I am happy to receive VTT Newsletters by email
- Please unsubscribe me from the VTT mailing list

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## PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE VTT ADMINISTRATOR

### Data Protection Statement

Under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998, which were superseded by the EU General Data Protection Regulations 2018 on 25th May, 2018, Valerie Taylor Trust is required to ensure that any Personal Data obtained in connection with membership, making financial donations or giving support to the Trust is held securely, is accurate, is relevant and used only for the purposes for which it was given. By providing your Personal Data to VTT, this is accepted as consent for VTT to use the data for the relevant purposes. Consent for any of these purposes may be withdrawn by writing to the Administrator at the address shown. The full Privacy Statement may be viewed on the VTT website – [www.valerietaylortrust.org](http://www.valerietaylortrust.org)

## Empowering people with disabilities in Bangladesh

**Administration Address:** 4 Wilberforce Road, Coxheath, Maidstone, Kent ME17 4HA  
**Tel:** 01622 743011 **Email:** [admin@valerietaylortrust.org](mailto:admin@valerietaylortrust.org) **Web:** [www.valerietaylortrust.org](http://www.valerietaylortrust.org)  
**Valerie Taylor Trust** is a charity registered in England and Wales (number 1122245)

# DONATE TO THE VALERIE TAYLOR TRUST

- I enclose a cheque for £..... payable to **Valerie Taylor Trust**       I intend to repeat this annually
- I would like to join the **Valerie Taylor Trust**      *(please tick as appropriate)*

In order to become a member, at least £25 per Year, or £2 per Month, must be given as a donation. You do not need to be a member to donate to the Valerie Taylor Trust, but being a member entitles you to regular updates on news and information and voting rights at the Annual General Meeting.

## PERSONAL DETAILS

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr) .....

Address .....

.....

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# Account No ..... # Bank Sort Code ..... - ..... - .....

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Account Number 3122 5227, Sort Code 40-28-29. IBAN GB96HBUK40282931225227

the sum of £..... starting on ^...../...../..... (date) and on the same date each **month\* / year\***  
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Signature ..... Date ^.....

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## GIFT AID DECLARATION

- I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify.
- I wish all future donations to VTT to be under the Gift Aid Scheme.
- I do not pay tax or sufficient tax to enable it to be reclaimed.      *(Please tick as appropriate)*

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## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Please send **all of the form** to The Administrator

**Empowering people with disabilities in Bangladesh**

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