

BURN VICTIM GETS RAY OF HOPE



By K.C. Vijayan
28 June 2004 (Singapore)

HIS cheeks are no longer puffy and he does not drool or stink from pus that festered in his wounds.

John, 13, is a burn victim who now lives a life less painful and ugly since he received a new form of treatment. Using light rays from Bioptron, it has hastened the healing of his burn injuries.

John (not his real name) suffered third-degree burns on a third of his body, including his chest, legs, neck and face, after a youth poured petrol on him and lit a match. The fiery attack took place in a park last Christmas.

They had squabbled over a girl and the 14-year-old attacker, who pleaded guilty on June 16, will be sentenced after the prosecution has made further submissions on him tomorrow.

The attack landed John in hospital for 42 days, during which he had several operations. He now goes for outpatient treatment at Singapore General Hospital three times a week.

Director Lina Ho offered to help the boy with Bioptron Medical Light Therapy treatment, using a device that is new in the market here.

Also used to ease pain caused by other medical conditions, such as rheumatism, sports injuries and gout, the treatment requires six to 10 sessions.

John goes every afternoon to the treatment centre on the third floor of Shaw Centre in Orchard Road and the changes have lifted the boy's spirits, said his 40-year-old mother, who declined to be identified.

He was beaming two days ago when he walked into the centre wearing trendy shoes that had wheels in their heel area. 'Being able to wear such shoes gives him an emotional lift,' added his mother.

The swellings on his face have gone down to such an extent that he can now feel her fingers on him. She was also surprised to see beads of perspiration on his face last Tuesday, for the first time since the attack, she added.