PELVIC FRACTURE TILE C2 BY CROCODILE ATTACK: DEVASTATING CASE IN LAHAD DATU

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Introduction: Lahad Datu's rural river water are inhabited by a vast number of saltwater crocodiles, Crocodylinae subfamily. There are numerous cases of crocodile attack in Lahad Datu with fatal outcome. These large aquatic predators are well known for their spinning maneuver to subdue and dismember prey. Referred to as the 'death roll', this maneuver involves rapid rotation along the longitudinal axis of the body. Injuries are major and are life or limb threatening. Managing patients post crocodile attack often requires multidisciplinary approach to ensure survivability.

Discussion: A 22 year old, local gentleman was brought in to Emergency Department by estate workers after a juvenile crocodile attack. There was a deep penetrating wound over the right inguinal region and multiple bite marks over the lumbar region and bilateral thigh. X ray and CT-scan revealed left Tile C2 pelvic ring fracture and right acetabular wall fracture. Patient was brought to Operating Theater on a pelvic binder post initial resuscitation for reduction and pelvic stabilization via external fixator, wound exploration and debridement.

Conclusion: Management of patient post crocodile attack is often challenging as they are capable of inflicting major injuries. Forces generated are predicted to increase proportionately with their size. An adult crocodile measuring at an average of 5meters are capable of generating more than 16000 newtons per square inch of bite force. With this bite force and spinning motion apexed at the snout, at high speed, dismemberment of large prey is effortless. Coupled with 'death roll' and nature of the apex predator, chances of survival remain low. Schematics of spinning motion. Blue arrows: Directions of rotation of head, body and tail. Red arrows: Compensatory rotation of the entire system.