

Hope and Despair In Delhi: Impoverished Patients Living on the Pavements Outside AIIMS Public Health Clinics

With a large number of patients and a shortage of night shelters, thousands of patients are spending days in the subway of AIIMS metro station or on the pavement outside AIIMS, as they wait for treatment.

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The All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) are a group of autonomous public medical colleges of higher education.

Not all the stories of courage have to do with the act of heroism. There is another kind of Courage, which is dour and silent. There are courageous poor patients outside AIIMS, who cannot afford private healthcare expenditure and pass months and years on the roads, metro station and bus stand.

They come to India's Premier medical institution AIIMS with hope that it will put an end to their miseries and suffering but here begins the ordeal that left them alternating between hope and despair. "We are waiting for either a cure or a death", said Roshana devi (57) from Ballia district of UP who is waiting for her Cancer to be treated in AIIMS from last one year. She is living on pavement outside AIIMS and passing her time with the hope that one day she will get operated in AIIMS that will end her ordeal.

"AIIMS is just like a Judicial Court, it gives Tarrikh one after the other sometimes after 1 month and sometimes after 15 days, those who put up with tribulation and attend the tarrikh, emerge victorious" said Vakil Ahmed (52) from Bareilly district of UP who is waiting for his next tarrikh, killing his time on metro station. These are just few stories to quote but there exist numerous stories of despair and courage. According to the 60th AIIMS Annual Report of the year 2015-2016, most of the outstation patients were from UP followed by Bihar, which reflects the dire state of health facilities in two of the most populous states of India. This also reflects the crippling and crumbling health facilities in state governments.



AIIMS: Indias premier Hospital displays grim state of health services in India



Bus stops outside AIIMS turns into beacon of light for the poor patients



Sheila kumari and Roshana devi waiting for their cancer to be treated, since last one year on the pavements



Roshana devi, performing her daily chores on the pavement, praying to god to end her ordeal



Divider grill of road, where all patients hang their wet clothes



Vakil Ahmed and his family says its as painful as getting through procedure of Judicial court where "Tarikh" comes up with endless pain and misery. We now accepted it as our destiny.



All patients dependent on regular free food service provided by various NGOs and Temples



Serpentine queue of patients outside AIIMS for getting food and water.



Rakesh Yadav, along with his only son suffering from Heart complications eating their food on road.



Metro station is place where they take rests, eat and sleep. Thus it's their shelter, but not one night shelter is opened up by the Govt so far.



Around six and seven in evening all patients start occupying space outside metro station and bus stand, otherwise there will be no space left in night to sleep.



Ultimately after day full of miseries they find peace and fall asleep on Bus stand and metro station.

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