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Kochi ; Hospitals Running Out Of Oxygen

Hospitals running out of oxygen, diesel

Hospitals In Flooded Areas Shift Patients; Severe Staff Shortage Reported

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Kochi: Many hospitals in the district cancelled routine operations and OPD on Thursday to cope with surge in patients from neighbouring hospitals that were waterlogged amid severe staff shortage being reported from these hospitals.

In most of the city hospitals, the staff strength was just about 30% to 35%, while the bed occupancy was almost 80% to 90%. Hospital authorities are concerned about two main things— liquid oxygen supply that is essential for patients of ventilator, ICU and surgeries as well as limited diesel stock to run generators due to power shutdown.

Aster Medcity has shifted all its patients to nearby hospitals. "We have done this as a precautionary manner. Now, we are only responding to emergency," said Dr Harish Pillai, CEO, Aster Medcity.

CIMAR too has started shifting many of its patients. With many hospitals in the district approaching major hospitals in the city for help to shift patients, some hospitals have started making arrangements to accommodate the patients



CHOPPER RESCUE: Rajani, 24, a pregnant woman who needed medical support, being airlifted from the flood-hit Angel Valley near Kanjirappally in Kottayam on Thursday. She had complained of severe pain on Thursday morning and the district administration provided the timely service of a chopper and Rajani was airlifted to General Hospital in Kanjirappally

and also ensure there is enough nursing and other staff to work round the clock.

Dr Sanjeev Singh, medical superintendent, Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences, said that they were consolidating all medical and surgical patients on common floor. They are also trying to discharge pa-

tients to the hospital guest house as much as possible. "We have called for help from all volunteers and are making arrangements for food and accommodation of staff who have been asked to stay back 24x7 at the hospital. All the surgeries were cancelled and OP was cancelled," said Dr Singh.

Meanwhile, in Lisie Hospital, selective surgeries were postponed due to liquid oxygen shortage. "We are running on generator since Thursday night. We are concerned about two things at the moment— diesel availability and liquid oxygen supply," said Fr Ajo Moothedan, assistant director,

Lisie Hospital.

Most of the hospitals get the liquid oxygen from Bengaluru and it is refilled once in seven to eight days, with most major hospitals having a minimum capacity of 11,000 litres. However, the vehicle that was to get liquid oxygen to the city is stuck in Thrissur due to inaccessible roads. Hospital authorities are already in talk with government and are hopeful that the vehicle would reach Kochi with police help.

Many hospitals admitted that they have been getting requests from other hospitals to accommodate patients but majority of beds are full. "Our beds are full and we do have difficulty taking any more patients," said Dr Krishnanunni Polakulath, MD, Renai Medcity.

"At present the situation is manageable and we can function without any problem for another four to five days. However, we had to cancel a few surgeries as patients couldn't make it to the hospitals and we don't have too many vacant beds as occupancy is high now," said Fr Johnson Vazhappilly, executive director, Rajagiri Hospital, Aluva.