

**NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
MANAV ADHIKAR BHAWAN, NEW DELHI  
(LAW DIVISION)**

**Report on the Visit of NHRC Team to the LNJP Hospital,  
Delhi on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2020**

**Background of the Case**

1. The Commission had received complaints as well as took cognizance of the media news that COVID patients are denied admissions in Govt Hospitals like LNJP Hospital, Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi etc. The patients are alleged to have been made to run from one Hospital to other on the pretext of non availability of beds in the Hospitals. In most of the state run Ambulances, oxygen cylinders are not there forcing the families to hunt for private ambulances, which charge very heavily. The Commission while going through the APP “Delhi Corona” found that on 11<sup>th</sup> June 3569 beds were vacant. In LNJP Hospital itself 1219 beds were vacant and in the GTB Hospital, beds (1314) were vacant. The Commission observed that there is a glaring discrepancy between the claims of the Govt. and the actual experience of the COVID patients.

The Commission on 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 took suo moto cognizance on this issue. Considering urgency of the matter and human lives being involved, it was felt that urgent stock taking visits of COVID Hospitals are necessary to know the ground reality.



Figure 1 NHRC team at LNJP Hospital

LNJP was chosen the first, being the largest hospital, visit was to verify, exact number of vacant beds, reasons of non-admission of COVID patients, quality of food being served, standard of treatment and status of disposal of dead bodies in the hospital.

## Visit

Pursuant to above, the NHRC team led by Smt. Jyotika Kalra, Hon'ble Member and consisting of Shri Om Prakash Vyas, Assistant Registrar (Law), Shri Kulbir Singh, Dy SP, Ms. Bhawna, Inspector of the Commission and Dr. Manish Kumath, Forensic Expert, Safdarjung Hospital, on panel of Commission and, Delhi visited LNJP Hospital on 11.6. 2020. Team



Figure 2 Interaction with hospital administration

interacted with the LNJP Hospital authorities including Dr. Suresh Kumar, Director Medical, Dr. Ritu Saxena (CCMO) the Medical Officer In charge of the Covid Patients and Dr. S.N. Basna, Medical Officer. The following information was provided by the Hospital authorities during the course of the interaction:-

(i) The LNJP Hospital, is the largest COVID-19 dedicated Hospital in Delhi with 2000 beds. The hospital is not a testing centre but test of health care workers is being conducted in the hospital. The patients are being admitted and treated as per the standard protocol. There are about 700 oxygen cylinders in the hospital and facility of direct oxygen supply through pipeline is available at 360 beds. It takes around two hours in shifting the dead bodies to mortuary but in some cases there had been delays in shifting due to lack of infrastructure support & Administrative hurdle.

(ii) Dr. Ritu Saxena, CMO expressed her concern that the private and Govt. hospitals, without checking / examining the patients are telephonically referring the patients to the LNJP Hospital without following any referral policy/protocol. The allegations that the hospital is denying admission according to her are false and baseless. Hospital is not admitting the Covid positive patients who don't require hospitalisation, around 20 % of the patients are refused admission on this ground.

(iii) It was informed that the hospital had so far treated about 4,000 COVID and other patients and out of them 3,000 COVID patients have so far been discharged after recovery.

(iv) It was informed that as on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2020, 781 patients are admitted out of which 587 patients are confirmed Corona positive and reports in respect of others are awaited.

(v) It was informed that during the last 24hours, 94 new patients have been admitted and 43 patients have been discharged. The average footfall of the patients is near around 100-120patients.

(vi) The hospital is admitting only the patients which are having severe symptoms. The patients are visiting the hospital on their own/by their own car and by ambulance. It was informed that patients are guided at the gate by a row and from the receiving area they are taken to the assessment area. After assessment, depending upon their condition, they are being admitted to the ICU if the condition is serious, otherwise are being admitted in the Medicine Block, Ortho Block and Surgery Blocks. The hospital is having separate wards (Corona Positive & Corona Suspect Ward).

(vii) It was also informed that in case of the need for the super speciality medical care for the Covid patients, assistance from the medical specialists of G.B. Pant Hospital is being taken.

(viii) It was informed that food to the patients was provided by the Taj Group till 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 as a part of CSR Programme and after that the meals are being provided by the hospital from their kitchen. The patients are being given breakfast, lunch, and dinner on regular timings and the patients are being provided hot water so that they can have tea as per their wish / choice.

(ix) It was informed that there is no proper referral policy in Delhi. The dispensaries are denying treatment to the patients. Non-COVID patients are also not getting any treatment. Private Hospitals are referring patients to LNJP Hospital when the family members are not in a position to pay their charges/bill.

(x) The District Surveillance Officers in New Delhi are discharging their duties only over telephone and are straightway forwarding the patients to the LNJP Hospital.

(xi) Dr. Ritu further informed that the LNJP hospital is even getting dead patients from Hospitals. It was also informed that the ambulance of Private Hospitals was noticed dumping patients from their ambulances in the premises of the LNJP Hospital and thereafter the ambulance quietly leaves the Hospital premises.

(xii) It was informed that the reports on COVID tests take about 2-3 days and during the intervening period conditions of the patients becomes critical.

(xiii) Dr. Ritu informed that patients are allowed mobile phone and food from home, only in ICU, phone is not allowed as it is a valuable article. It was also informed that in some cases, the moment the COVID patients are admitted, their family members leave the Hospital at once and do not interact either with the patients or with the Doctors for follow up action by remaining incommunicado. Further, in some cases, even after death of the COVID patients, the family members preferred not to come to the mortuary and claim the dead body. Taking care of covid patient who has no personnel attendant becomes very taxing for the hospital.



Figure 3 Team surveying emergency ward

### **Interactions with the Staff deputed in the Hospital and Family Members of COVID Patients in and outside hospital.**

1. **Statement of Sh. Harish Kannaujia, Aast. Section Officer (ASO), Education Department Delhi :** He stated that he is serving in the Govt. of NCT of Delhi. On 8.06.2020, he was deployed at LNJP Hospital to assist the family members of the Covid Patients, who are admitted in the LNJP Hospital. He works in the shifts from 08:00 AM to 08:00 PM daily. He issues passes to the persons, who visits hospital to give food items to the patients.

2. **Statement of Sh. Pankaj Anand & Sameer, Civil Defense Employee:** They stated that they are deployed at the 4th Gate of the hospital to assist the family members of the Corona patients, who comes to give food items to the patients.

3. **Statement of Sh. Madh K.K, age 36 years and Vijay Bahadur, Security Staff of the hospital:** They stated that they deliver food items to the patients provided by their family members in the Covid wards.

**Following are the response from family members:**

1. **Statement of Sh. Ashish, age 34 years R/o Patel Nagar, Delhi, M.No.-9958750234:** He stated that his mother Smt. Sumedha was tested Corona positive on 09.06.2020. On the same day, he came to LNJP Hospital to get his mother admitted in the hospital. They did not face any problem in admission. Today, he came to provide some fruits & food to her mother and did not face any problem.

2. **Statement of Sh. Mukesh, age 32 years M.No.-9990417010:** He stated that his father Sh. Om Prakash age-60 years is Corona patient. On 05.06.2020, he came by his own car to get his father admitted in the LNJP hospital. The hospital staff immediately admitted his father without any delay. Initially, he went to R.K Ashram, Marg Hospital for admission but they denied admission, then they came here and here did not face any problem in admission. On 07.06.2020, Corona test of his father has been found negative.

3. **Statement of Sh. Kuldeep, age 38 years R/o Islampur, Gurugram, Haryana M.No.-9999532822:** He stated that his younger brother Devender, age-32 years is Corona patient. They went to Govt. Hospital, Gurugram for Corona test, where his brother was tested positive. The hospital referred his brother to the LNJP hospital. Today, i.e 11.06.2020, he came here for admission of his brother and did not face any problem in admission.

4. **Statement of Sh. Rahul age-24 years, R/o Handa Housing Home, Rajouri garden. M.No-9871542132:** He stated that his father Sh. Sunil age-56 years was referred from private hospital to LNJP Hospital on 06.05.2020. Oxygen level of his father was very low and saturation was low. His father was tested for Covid but the reports are awaited. They are not informed about the result of the tests.

5. **Statement of Sh. Sanjay Arora age-25 years R/o Sec-15, Rohini, M.No.-9971944659:** He stated that his mother Smt. Indu aged 47 years, was initially admitted in Ambedkar Hospital. She was tested Corona positive and referred to LNJP Hospital when her situation was deteriorated. She was admitted in ICU of LNJP hospital and they did not face any problem there in admission of her mother.

6. **Statement of Sh. Nitish Bhardwaj, son of R.P. Sharma, resident of B-41, 41 Feet Road, Street No. 7, Tomar Colony, Burari, Delhi-110084 (Mob No. 8510853131):** has stated that his father was admitted in the LNJP Hospital on 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 (early morning) and till 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 (2100 hrs), none of the Doctors came to attend his father R.P. Sharma in the COVID ward. Neither temperature of the patient was recorded nor was any medicine administered to the patient. He himself entered the COVID ward and handed over thermometer, water flask, medicines, foods etc so that the patient can treat himself. He has alleged that despite his repeated requests to the Doctors posted to the ward, no visit was paid to the patient. On seeing the attitude of the Medical Officer there, he got his father discharged from the Hospital at 2200 hrs on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2020. He also alleged that his uncle Kunj Bihari Sharma who was also admitted in the COVID ward had died on 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 on account of medical negligence by the Doctors. He further stated that his father R.P. Sharma was initially denied treatment in the Hospital in Delhi in particular by the GTB Hospital and his father was admitted in the LNJP Hospital after running from pillar to post and making tweets to the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi. Help Line Nos 1031 or 1075 were of no help. According to him, Govt. has no preparedness to deal with this pandemic and deaths are taking place in the Hospitals. Condition of the LNJP Hospital is pathetic and a prayer has been made for intervention by the Commission in the matter.

7. **Statement of Ravi, son of Prem Bahadur, resident of JJ 26, Rajiv Gandhi Camp, Sadh Nagar, New Delhi-110045 (Mobile No. 9667563213):** has stated that his father Prem Bahadur had tested Corona positive on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2020. On seeing his condition, he was admitted initially in DDU Hospital and from where he was referred to the LNJP Hospital, Delhi. It has been alleged that his father was neither given proper food nor oxygen was given to him on time. There was utter negligence in the treatment by the Medical authorities. The Doctors used to switch off the Mobile phone of his father at times and therefore they could not remain in constant touch with him. During conversation with his father, it was transpired that nutritious diet

was not being given to him and he was not given oxygen at a times while feeling difficulty in respiration / breathing. His father has ultimately died and his last rites were performed on 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2020. A prayer has been made by the family for intervention by the Commission in the matter. During interaction, it was told by Ravi and his sister that their father Prem Bahadur was the only bread winner and now the family is on the verge of starvation.



Figure 4 NHRC team surveying available beds

Apart from the above, the team has also interacted with the Covid patients who were coming to the Emergency ward of the hospital. Medical Officers on duty and paramedical staff posted in the Emergency Ward. Team checked the wards with the vacant beds and availability of cylinders, working of the Dialysis ward for the Corona patients.

It was found that a full term Covid pregnant female was transported alone by her relative. One of a attendant of the patient who was referred from Ambedkar Hospital revealed that he himself pulled the stretcher to get his father inside the emergency.

Another patient from Bulandsahar with a complaint of chest pain was found at the entrance of the Covid emergency. He was asked to go to another hospital.

Outside the hospital, relatives of the patients were very anxious as they were completely dissociated with their patients and there was no mode of communication between patients and relatives. Relatives of those who had died were also anxious as they were waiting for the bodies.

Team observed that good system of guiding the patients is lacking. The reasons for refusing to admit the patients are not uniformly followed for all. Twenty percent Covid positive patients are sent back home on the ground that they don't require hospitalisation and most these patients insist for admission in hospital for the reason that they don't have designated space at home where patient can quarantine.

## **Recommendations of the Commission:**

### **A. Administrative**

1. The hospital should establish a Help desk with important phone numbers displayed at the initial point of contact with the patient.
2. A window should be opened with a two-way communication with a mic and speaker so that patients are be provided proper directions.
3. Transportation like wheel chair be provided at the gate of hospital to patients reaching hospital on foot.
4. At gate of emergency ward, hospital attendants should always be present to receive the patient from Ambulance.
5. 3 to 4 help desk systems be provided where the relatives can find out the status of their patient.
6. If medically permitted, CCTV Cameras to be installed in the wards where patients are admitted so that doctors can monitor the patients continuously.
7. The facility of calling up the relatives by the patients should be made available to the patient at least twice a day.
8. The quality of food to be provided to patients should be monitored by a dietician.
9. The administrator should ensure proper sanitization of wards and lavatories.
10. The patients should be allowed to be in touch with their family members through their mobile phones & should also have the facility of home cooked food.
11. List of the Oxygen enabled Ambulances be put on the website by NCT Delhi and the charges of the Ambulances be also monitored.

### **B. Death of patient in hospital**

12. The death of the patient should be communicated to the relatives at the earliest.
13. Dead bodies of the Corona Patients be removed from the wards as per the standard practice without any delay and all possible assistance be rendered to the aggrieved families for the last rituals in a dignified and safe manner.



## **C. Medical**

14. The doctors/ para medical staff should work on building up confidence in the patients and relatives by regular counselling.
15. There is an urgent need to provide psychological counselling to the medical and paramedical staff on duty.
16. Proper referral and admission protocol need to be devised and practiced.
17. For augmenting the man power, services of final year MBBS students can also be availed appropriately. The retired medical and paramedical staff in sound health can also be roped in.
18. Covid Care Centre be created for those Covid positive patients who live in slums or rehabilitation colonies including those who don't have independent toilet and room for the quarantine. Hospital should refer such Covid positive patients, to these Covid Care Centres who don't require hospitalisation. However those who have facility of quarantine at home and don't require hospitalisation, should quarantine at their respective homes.

The Commission may consider transmitting a copy of the NHRC Team's visit report to the Chief Secretary, Govt of NCT of Delhi calling for the action taken report within a period of 2 weeks. Further course of action may be decided thereafter.

**Jyotika Kalra**