

# 8 yrs after construction, Rajiv Gandhi hospital opens doors to indoor patients

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NEW DELHI, MAY 17

EIGHT YEARS after it was constructed in a sprawling plot in northeast Delhi, the Rajiv Gandhi super-specialty hospital in Tahirpur finally opened its doors to indoor patients in April.

The facility, which is expected to be formally inaugurated by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, will provide treatment in super-specialty departments such as cardiology, cardiac surgery and critical care.

The facilities are free for EWS patients with annual income less than Rs 1 lakh and those with residence proof in the capital. The latter are those covered under the Delhi government's Arogya Kosh and Arogya Nidhi schemes.

Patients who are not under the EWS category have been paying for most procedures since April 1, according to orders issued on March 23. Sources confirmed that rates for most procedures are on par with Central Government Health Scheme rates charged in private hospitals.

As per the newly-introduced user charges under the "economy category", a 2D and 3D echocardiography costs Rs 1,200 and Rs 1,400 respectively. A coronary angiography costs Rs 10,350. Endoscopic ultrasounds cost about Rs 1,700. The same procedures are free at G B Pant hospital, the government's existing super-specialty hospital.

Health Minister Satyendar



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Jain said room charges in the economy category will be revised. "It is not fair to compare this hospital with AIIMS or GB Pant. This hospital was lying unused and non-functional for so many years. We have made it functional with the best facilities across the country. The facilities are completely free for EWS patients and those covered under the government's insurance scheme," he said.

He added that the financial model — a society under the overall aegis of the Delhi government — was similar to hospitals such as Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences in south Delhi.

Director Dr Sunil Khattri said the hospital — with its centrally air-conditioned building, LCD screens in waiting areas and acres of well-maintained lawns — is a

far cry from a "regular" government hospital. "As we have been told, the aim is to move towards fiscal self-reliance slowly. If that is to be done, and quality services are to be provided, services cannot be entirely free," he said.

According to him, "85 per cent of Delhi" will still get free services in categories included under free treatment. He added that the hospital could best be described as "publicly funded but not for profit".

A patient, who had come for a gastroenterology consultation for his wife, said, "This is the new age of government healthcare. I can pay for basic investigations and a consultation, but I don't know if I can afford to get admitted here. I am a driver but I don't have a BPL card or residence proof."

## PROCEDURES & FACILITIES

### COST OF SURGICAL PROCEDURES:

- Intra-coronary stenting costs a little over Rs 79,000. Cost of the stent is extra.
- Aortic stent grafting for an aortic aneurism costs above Rs 70,000. Stent will cost extra.
- Renal or carotid angioplasties cost around Rs 54,000 and Rs 57,000 respectively.
- Room in economy ward costs Rs 1,000 per day. ICU bed in the same category costs Rs 1,750.

### FACILITIES:

- 24-hr biochemistry lab with high-end equipment such as five PAMT fully-automated hematology analyser.
- Machine has critical alert system whereby laboratory scientist can alert doctors when patient's platelets fall.
- Rapid culture technology which performs blood cultures at one-third of the usual time.
- 250 of 650 beds have been operational in the first phase. On an average, 8-10 patients are admitted everyday.