

## **The Times of India**

### **With 16 vacant posts in district hospital, staff crunch hits health services**

MEERUT: Despite a total of 47 sanctioned posts in the PL Sharma district hospital, 16 lie vacant due to no fresh recruitments in the health department. Health services, doctors said, have been severely hit because of this, and not much can be done because specialised doctors are not available.

"My son's leg got burnt after he accidentally dropped boiling water on it. When I reached the hospital I got to know that there is no plastic surgeon here. I am from a very poor family and my husband drives a rickshaw. I don't have the money to take him to a private hospital," said Bijendri Kumari, mother of the patient.

It is not just the plastic surgery department that doesn't have any surgeons. There are many others with the same set of problems. The hospital has a total of 47 sanctioned posts for doctors, out of which 31 are occupied. The hospital does not have a single neuro physician, plastic surgeon, nephrologist, neurosurgeon, TB and chest specialist or psychiatrist. For all these specialisations, there is a sanctioned post of one doctor each but even that cannot be filled.

Sunil Gupta, chief medical superintendent, PL Sharma district hospital, said, "Most of the vacant posts are those of super-specialty doctors. I have written to the state government about the vacant posts many times but no action has been taken so far."

Authorities said that every year a letter demanding filling up the vacant posts is sent to the authorities but the doctors these days opt for private hospitals or open their own clinics because private jobs pay better. In this scenario, it was just not possible to fill the posts even though they were urgently needed.

"When patients of a certain category - for which we don't have doctors - arrive, they have to be referred to other hospitals outside the district or to other government hospitals in Meerut, as the case may be," said Gupta.