



\$~

* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**
+ **W.P.(C) 380 /2026 (to be numbered)**

THE COURT ON ITS OWN MOTION

.....Petitioner

Through:

versus

STATE

.....Respondent

Through:

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE C. HARI SHANKAR

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE OM PRAKASH SHUKLA

ORDER

12.01.2026

%

1. We have come across an article in The Hindu of 11 January 2026, titled "Night shelters packed, patients, kin brave the cold outside hospitals" which refer to the pitiable conditions of persons of patients, attendants and kin of patients who are waiting for treatment in Hospitals and who have no place to stay.

2. To our mind, this issue calls for urgent executive and/or judicial intervention.

3. Accordingly, the Registry is directed to register this as a writ petition under the *suo moto* Public Interest Litigation head.

4. For the present, we direct the Registry to implead the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Ministry of Social Justice and

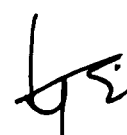
Empowerment and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs which



has control over the night shelters in Delhi, as well as the GNCTD.

5. Let a writ petition in the aforesaid terms be registered and listed before the Division Bench-I which deals with Public Interest Litigation, as per Roster, subject to orders of Hon'ble the Chief Justice, today itself.

6. A copy of the aforenoted Article shall constitute an annexure to this order.


C. HARI SHANKAR, J


OM PRAKASH SHUKLA, J

JANUARY 12, 2026/AR



Annexure:



Under the open sky: People seen with their beddings outside AIIMS on Saturday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Night shelters packed, patients, kin brave the cold outside hospitals

Ashna Butani
NEW DELHI

As Delhi shivers in a cold, with temperatures dipping to 4.6 degrees Celsius, 27-year-old Yashodha Kumari from Palamu, Jharkhand, waits each night for the shops in Ansari Nagar to close so she can quietly set up her makeshift camp and find a place to sleep while her husband receives treatment at AIIMS.

"The nights are getting chillier, but I don't have any other option," said Ms. Kumari. She keeps her one-year-old daughter wrapped in blankets to protect her from the cold. Her husband is being treated for a throat tumour at AIIMS, and the family has been in Delhi for over a week.

She is not alone. Hundreds of patients and their families unfurl blankets outside the AIIMS metro station, sleeping beneath the open sky. Many have journeyed from Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand and Bihar, seeking affordable or free medical care, but with no means to pay for a roof over their heads.

Their ordeal deepened when rain fell on Friday night, leaving their clothes and blankets drenched.

Across the street, the temporary night shelters run by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board are packed to capacity, as is AIIMS's 'Vishram Sadan' dormitory, which was built for patients and their families.

NGO volunteers visited the area around metro stations and suggested a shelter home in Geeta Colony, over 15 kilometres from AIIMS, where a handful of beds are available.

Sunil, 25, from Gaya in Bihar, has a kidney-related illness. "I prefer to stay near the hospital for regular appointments and check-ups," he said.

'Over 7,000 on roads'

The Centre for Holistic Development (CHD), a non-profit in Delhi, has written to Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda to request more makeshift tents and night shelters outside major hospitals in the city.

Sunil Kumar Aledia, executive director of CHD, wrote, "A grave humanitarian crisis is unfolding outside hospitals such as AIIMS, Safdarjung Hospital, Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, and Lady Hardinge Medical College."

Mr. Aledia said a team counted 7,882 people "compelled to sleep" outside hospitals in Delhi.

He warned that these conditions expose people to hypothermia, respiratory illnesses, and a host of other health risks.

AIIMS officials said they have been encouraging patients to use the in-house shelters such as Vishram Sadan, which has 694 beds, and the 'Ashray' camp with 250 beds. However, a notice board outside Vishram Sadan on Friday night said the dormitories were full.