

After a decade, Bone and Joint Hospital revived with a new building

Chief Minister promises creation of additional staff to improve patient care

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Over a decade since the devastating floods of 2014 rendered a major part of the Bone and Joint Hospital here 'unsafe', the new building funded by World Bank as part of Jhelum-Tawi Flood Recovery Project was inaugurated today by J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

The new hospital building is expected to alleviate the inconveniences faced by patients and doctors at the congested, dilapidated existing structures.

The new state-of-art building is a G+5 structure with modular operation theatres that was set to be completed in 2020, however, it suffered multiple deadline lapses. The new OTS are expected to bring down the waiting period for surgeries, which currently runs into months.

In addition, it has a laminar flow system and a TSSU (Theatre Sterile Supply Unit) for better infection control. In addition, an advanced ICU, Pre & Post Operation care wards, CSSD (Central Sterile Supply Department), specialised laundry, pneumatic tube system, and a waste collection system make this one of the finest hospital buildings in Kashmir at present. The addition of 120 beds is also expected to provide acceptable space for admitting patients from across the Valley and beyond.

The hospital, in the absence of adequate wards and beds, was forced to add beds in the corridors to cater to the load of patients. The Bone and Joint Hospital suffered



■ **June 2015** – Jhelum-Tawi Flood Recovery Project approved by World Bank with a component for hospitals

■ **June 2016** – Six members of WB 'Mission Team' visited Srinagar hospitals and inspected the infrastructure and buildings.

■ **December 2016** – Rs 140 crore funding approved for hospitals, including B&J Hospital

■ **October 2018** – No response to tenders for hospital construction

■ **March 2019** – Project executing agency finalized

the only Orthopedic Specialty Hospital in Kashmir, it is the cornerstone of trauma and other orthopedic ailments.

The CM acknowledged the requirement of additional staff to run the additional 120-beds of the hospital and promised fast-track creation and filling of posts. He directed Minister for health and Medical Education, Sakina Itoo to submit the proposal for recruitment of staff "at the earliest".

The CM recalled the "times" the hospital has seen over the years. "This hospital has seen the ups and downs of the situation in Kashmir," while referring to the

Hospital," he said. He recalled how he and his colleagues tried to stop water from entering the hospital. "However, even after the floods, the hospital did not stop functioning," he said, much to the applause of the audience that comprised medical practitioners, and hospital administrators, in addition to locals from the area and Government officials.

The CM commended the hospital staff for starting to function "just a few days after the devastating fire of 2022". "They did not have a roof over their heads, but they resumed patient services," he said.