

Hospitals in city step up emergency preparedness

Mumbai: Amid escalating tensions between India and Pakistan, city hospitals and doctors have begun organising various drives, ranging from blood donation to safety drills, and shipping first aid kits to some border areas.

On Friday, Maharashtra Association of Resident Doctors (MARD) representatives from the civic-run Nair Hospital near Mumbai Central organised a blood donation drive to collect 50-100 units. At Hinduja Hospital in Mahim, the chief warden of Civil Defence conducted a safety drill for 120 staff from various hospitals in the city. "The aim of the drill conducted by the Civil Defence team (which works under the Directorate of Civil Defence, Maharashtra) was to train hospital staff on how to handle the situation after, say, air strikes," said Hinduja Hospital COO Joy Chakraborty.

Dr Akshay Dongadive, who heads Nair Hospital's MARD unit, said, "We are encouraging doctors on the day shift as well as the larger public to donate. The idea is to ensure we are medically prepared for any escalation."

KEM Hospital's resident doctors are awaiting administrative approval before launching their blood donation drive. "By next week, KEM and likely other hospitals will also hold similar camps," said KEM MARD President Dr Amar Agame.

Lilavati Hospital has promised free medical treatment to armed forces personnel and govt officials injured in the ongoing conflict.

Doctors For You, a voluntary group of young doctors set up in KEM Hospital in response to the 2008 Bihar floods, is already in the conflict zone. "We have rushed ambulances and first aid kits for the border staff," said Dr Ravikant Singh of Doctors For You. TNN