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## COVID: Deceased Ludhiana woman was referred to Patiala as Civil Hospital's ventilators not operational

Took several hours to arrange ambulance as 108 service unresponsive

Posted: 📅 Mar 31, 2020 01:24 PM (IST) Updated: 🕒 1 month ago

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**Manav Mander**  
**Tribune News Service**  
**Ludhiana, March 31**

Ventilators at the Civil Hospital in Ludhiana have been gathering dust for a year and patients who need the breathing device are being referred to Rajindra Hospital in Patiala.

The isolation ward set up for COVID-19 patients at the hospital does not have a single ventilator.

The Ludhiana-based COVID-19 positive woman, who died on Monday at Rajindra Hospital, was referred to Patiala as she needed a ventilator. She was 42.

In fact, the family struggled to arrange an ambulance after the woman was referred to Patiala.

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Sukhwinder Singh, the brother-in-law of the patient, said that she was referred to Patiala at around 6 pm. He claims that the family kept trying the 108 ambulance service for three hours but it the ambulance did not turn up.

After 9 pm, the family arranged the ambulance on their own by paying Rs 4000.

“If the ventilators would have been here at Ludhiana, the treatment would have started earlier,” he said.

The Civil Hospital had purchased 14 ventilators a year ago, which include nine for newborns and the remaining five for the operation theatre. The cost of these ventilators is around Rs 2 crore.

The hospital, which is already grappling with a staff shortage, will need at least ten staff nurses and resident doctors to kickstart the ventilator service. In addition to this, there is no centralised suction system and no 24-hour oxygen back-up in the hospital. On most days, nearly 7-8 patients, who are in need of ventilators, are referred to other places by the hospital.

Senior Medical Officer Dr Ravi Dutt said that he was making arrangements to make the service operational.

Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu said that he was aware of the fact that ventilators were not operational at the Civil Hospital.

“I have asked them to make the ventilators operational and we are ready to spend the money as required. I will be chairing a meeting in the afternoon and all the necessary decisions pertaining to these will be taken today,” he said.

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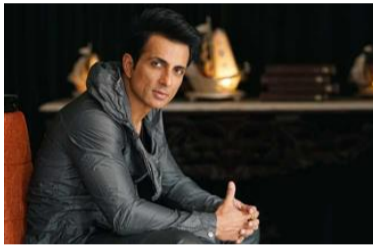
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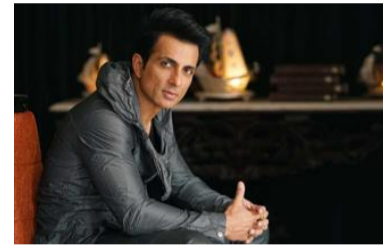
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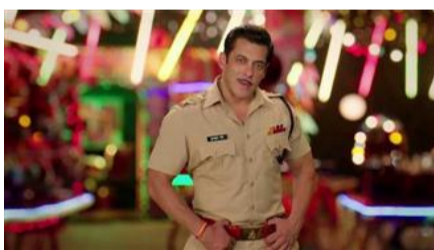
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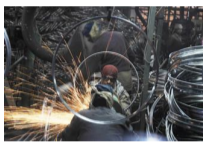
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