

Nepal grapples with mental upheaval - The Times of India

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MUMBAI: Acute sleep disorders and panic attacks are common among Nepalese survivors of the devastating earthquake on April 25, found a team of city doctors who spent 10 days providing medical aid in Kathmandu and nearby areas.

"Around 60% of the patients who came to us had symptoms of insomnia. The spate of aftershocks, which still continue, has resulted in sleep deprivation among many residents," said Dr Vishal Sawant, head of the psychiatry department of civic-run Cooper Hospital in Juhu, who has just returned from [Nepal](#).

Dr Sawant responded to a social media message put up by an NGO called PEHL (Prime Education Health Learning Services) run by a Navi Mumbai doctor couple, Anjana and Amit Thadani, to go on a medical mission to Nepal. "Nine of us reached Kathmandu on April 30 with the help of a Haridwar-based social group called Gayatri Parivar," he added.

Apart from acute sleep disorder, other common psychiatric problems Dr Sawant observed, were panic disorders and anxiety. "People are also suffering gastritis born out of anxiety. The post-traumatic stress disorder will emerge in a while if these day-to-day symptoms are not addressed," he added. He remembers a woman walking into one of their camps complaining of body ache. "She went to Dr Sanjay Sonar, the surgeon in

our team, but then he called me. As we began counselling her, we realized she had practically lost everything; her children were dead and she couldn't locate her husband," said Dr Sawant.

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