

'Botched' India cataract surgery leaves 15 with sight loss

December 1 2015

At least 15 people in northern India have lost the sight in one eye after having "botched" cataract surgery, local officials told AFP Tuesday.

The surgeries were performed last week at a mass surgery organised by a charity in Haryana state's Ambala district, but the problems only came to light after [patients](#) began turning up at a local government hospital.

Ambala's chief medical officer Vinod Kumar Gupta said the organisation, Sarv Kalyan Sewarth Samithi, did not have [government permission](#) to hold the surgery.

"We are on the ground right now to inspect the hospital and our medical teams are collecting details from the patients," Gupta told AFP.

"So far we only know of 15 patients who were operated on and their surgeries botched.

"We know that when they came to the government hospital they had lost vision in the eye which had been operated upon."

The patients only realised they had lost their sight after the bandages were removed from their eyes.

Cataract surgery is generally considered low-risk, but such incidents are not uncommon in India.

The latest incident came days after 14 people lost their sight after undergoing the same procedure in western India, with [local authorities](#) saying hospital staff failed to sterilise equipment properly.

Gupta said the medical facility where the victims underwent surgery "doesn't meet any of the government's set infrastructure standards for such a facility".

No one at the Sarv Kalyan Sewarth Samithi could immediately be reached for comment.

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