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KMCH doc turns hero in Lanka

Performs brain surgery without opening skull

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

Coimbatore, Sept 16: A city-based interventional radiologist flew to Colombo to successfully perform a double aneurysm in the brain, without opening the skull.

Mala Ranasinghe, a 65-year-old woman and mother of a doctor, was admitted to the National Hospital in Colombo in Sri Lanka, with an attack of severe headache.

CT scans showed that the major blood vessel supplying blood to the brain had two areas with abnormal bulges called aneurysms. Left untreated, there was a high risk of a second hemorrhage.

Neurosurgeons at the hospital felt the safest option would be treating the aneurysms without opening the skull by a procedure called DGC coiling.

Dr Mathew Cherian, a radiologist

at Kovai Medical Centre and Hospital (KMCH), was called to perform the surgery. As shifting the patient out of the country was out of question due to her condition, Dr Cherian flew to Colombo and performed the surgery on September 9.

In this procedure, a small tube (microcatheter) would be inserted in a blood vessel in the thigh and navigated into the abnormal sac in the blood vessel in the brain under imaging guidance.

Under general anaesthesia, Cherian first navigated a thin balloon into the abnormal blood vessel positioning it close to the aneurysm. "This is called the remodelling balloon," he said. This would be used intermittently to ensure that the coils did not prolapse out of the abnormal sac into the normal blood vessels which would lead to massive stroke, he

pointed out.

Then a fine specialised tube was guided by the side of the previous catheter into the aneurysm itself. Six fine platinum coils, smaller than human hair, were placed within the aneurysm obliterating it completely. The second aneurysm was treated in the same way during the delicate procedure that lasted for four hours.

"An angiogram after the surgery showed that the procedure had successfully treated both the aneurysms. After a week now the patient is back at home," said Dr Cherian, who treats four such cases at KMCH weekly.

Cherian, one of the few in the country specialised in such a surgery innovated by French, would be visiting the National Hospital in Sri Lanka to train its doctors in the coming year.