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SC tells UP medical college to pay ₹10L each to 150 students

Compensation
For Illegal
Admissions

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New Delhi: In the wake of an ongoing investigation into a judicial nexus in illegal medical college admissions, the Supreme Court directed a Lucknow-based college on Thursday to pay Rs 10 lakh each to 150 students as compensation and sternly admonished a bench of the Allahabad high court for permitting the admissions.

The court asked the college to refund the admission fee paid by the students and slapped a fine of Rs 25 lakh to be paid to the SC registry. It also barred the college from admitting students for the next academic year, 2018-19.

Not mincing words while pulling up the division bench of the Allahabad HC for allowing the institute to admit students in violation of its or-

COURT HAULS UP ALLAHABAD HC BENCH

- SC admonishes an Allahabad HC bench for permitting admissions, says it's a case of 'judicial indiscipline and impropriety'
- MCI counsel tells SC that HC allowed admissions though college didn't have permission from Centre and lacked infrastructure, clinical material and faculty
- SC says HC bench virtually overruled its order, transgressing all rules and regulations



der, a bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud said it was a case of "judicial indiscipline and impropriety".

The apex court said the HC bench had virtually overruled the SC order, transgressing all rules and regulations.

"It is most unfortunate, which may cause [an] institutional problem," the bench said and hinted that it may address the issue on the administrative side.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh and lawyer Gaurav

Sharma, appearing for the Medical Council of India (MCI), told the bench that the HC allowed admissions even though the college didn't have formal permission from the Centre and failed to consider that the college suffered from deficiencies in infrastructure, clinical material and faculty. Moreover, the HC ignored the earlier SC order restraining any interim order in this regard.

Senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan, appearing for the college, said the institution should not be punished for

the HC's wrong verdict but the bench remained firm.

A bench of the Allahabad HC was recently in the news after the CBI arrested a retired judge of the Orissa HC, I M Quddusi, for allegedly conspiring to facilitate a favourable order for a college run by Prasad Education Trust—also a Lucknow-based institution. Quddusi had earlier served in the Allahabad HC.

The SC's order assumes significance in view of allegations of a middlemen-judges nexus for getting favourable judgments in cases of medical admissions. The CBI arrested Quddusi and five others for allegedly conspiring to "settle" an MCI order debarring a private medical college from MBBS admissions. The case exposed the rot and corruption in medical education.

Quddusi has been accused by CBI of offering "legal guidance" to the promoters of the private medical college on how to get around the admission ban and even promising suitable orders from the SC.

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SC: Medical college polluted young minds

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Investigating agencies have also lodged an FIR against two IAS officers serving in Puducherry — former health secretary BR Babu and Narendra Kumar, who headed the committee on admissions to medical colleges — for allegedly denying admissions to deserving students and selling seats to others at “exorbitant” rates.

Coming down heavily on GCRG Memorial Trust, which runs the college in Lucknow, the bench said it had illegally admitted students and jeopardised their careers. The bench said the college must compensate them for playing with their careers and “polluting young minds” by admitting them in violation of the law.

In the current case, the court had earlier passed an order restraining the HC from issuing any interim order. The HC, however, went ahead and allowed the college to admit students for the current session, drawing the SC’s ire.

Centre seeks action against pvt hosps

New Delhi: The health ministry on Thursday asked all states to issue strict warnings and take action against hospitals, including private ones, which indulge in malpractices such as overcharging and don't follow standard treatment protocols.

The move comes in the wake of allegations that Gurgaon-based Fortis Hospital billed the family of a dengue patient Rs 16 lakh.

In a letter to the chief secretaries, Union health secretary Preeti Sudan said that alleged malpractices by clinical establishments not only compromise patient safety but also raise concerns about accountability in healthcare costs.

She asked the states to ensure implementation of the Clinical Establishment (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010, under which all hospitals can be regulated. "It is time to learn les-



CURBING MALPRACTICE

sons from such incidents and I advise that a meeting with all important health-care establishments of your state be taken and they be clearly sounded not to indulge in such practices.

"I request you to kindly get the Clinical Establishment Act adopted/implemented by your state also," Sudan said in the letter. Referring to the recent incident in which a 7-year-old girl died of dengue at Fortis hospital, Sudan said it was alleged that the patient was grossly overcharged. PTI

ICMR to find out what kills Indians

Kalyan Ray

NEW DELHI, DHNS: With India having a very poor death record, the country's top medical research agency has begun to set up a process, which in future would inform the health authorities the cause of every death in India.

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) would begin the pilot programme of the death analysis study in Tamil Nadu, Assam and Odisha from January 2018, Sanjay Mehen-dale, ICMR's additional deputy director general said.

Verbal autopsy

The process, they would em-

ploy, is called verbal autopsy in which a trained health worker would visit every house with a set of questions, seeking answers from deceased's relatives.

On the basis of the responses, doctors would ascertain the cause of death. This is used only for those cases where a person died without any medical record.

In the verbal autopsy process, scientific skills are utilised to frame the questions to bring out the correct answers.

Automated analysis

"Verbal autopsy methods have improved significantly over the past decade, with validated questionnaires and automated cause-of-death analysis," said



Rohina Joshi, a researcher at the Delhi-based George Institute for Global Health, who is not linked to the ICMR project.

"We need 10-15 outreach workers to cover the entire district. The workers will have to visit the houses within a month of the death. We intend to start

the pilots by January, 2018," Soumya Swaminathan, ICMR director general said.

Million Death Study

The same method was adopted for the Million Death Study - one of the world's largest mortality studies in the world

conducted by Indian and Canadian public health experts in collaboration with the Registrar General of India.

"We want to institutionalise the system to improve our cause of death estimates. If we know the causes, we can plan right medical intervention," Soumya said.

The Statistics

On an average, nearly 55-60 lakh Indians die each year. ICMR's latest disease burden report showed in 1990 most of the death (53.6%) happened due to communicable, maternal, neonatal and nutritional diseases whereas in 2016 non-communicable diseases like cancer, stroke and cardiovascular diseases cause most

(61.8%) of deaths. There is also a marginal rise in deaths due to injury.

While such broad-picture scenario are available currently, verbal autopsy would generate more area and disease specific death data.

The disease burden report shows that life expectancy at birth improved in India from 59.7 years in 1990 to 70.3 years in 2016 for females, and from 58.3 years to 66.9 years for males.

There were, however, continuing inequalities between states, with a range of 66.8 years in Uttar Pradesh to 78.7 years in Kerala for females, and 63.6 years in Assam to 73.8 years in Kerala for males in 2016.

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