



IMA's cycle rally against National Medical Commission

TUMAKURU, DHNS: The nationwide cycle rally, being taken out from Indian Medical Association (IMA) against the setting up of the proposed National Medical Commission (NMC), entered the city on Saturday.

Dr Amir, Sanjeev Soni and N Brito, who are leading the South India leg of the rally, started the rally on March 12 from Kanyakumari and have entered the state through Kerala.

IMA district unit president Dr Suresh Prabhu, general secretary Dr Srinath, mem-

bers Dr Basavaraju and Prabhakar welcomed the team members with bouquets. They were felicitated at the IMA Hall later.

On the occasion, Soni said, "Small clinics will down shutters if the NMC is established. Medical service will be handed over to corporate companies like Reliance. The doctors themselves have to cough up exorbitant fees to get treatment. Then, one can imagine the plight of poor."

He said the rules and regulations behind the establishment of the NMC are against

the dreams of the citizens. If the NMC is set up, non-medical parties will gain control over the field. The members of the public should wake up and support the IMA in this regard, he stated.

Soni said the cycle rally does not have any political intentions. Three teams are taking out the cycle rallies from various parts of the country. All members of the cycle rally teams converge on March 24 in New Delhi. The members of the public are supporting the cause, he added. The team later left for Davangere.



The members of the district unit of Indian Medical Association with the members of a cycle rally

Medical institute staffer files sexual harassment complaint against chairman

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A 30-year-old employee of the Akash Institute of Medical Sciences and Research, Devanahalli, has filed a sexual harassment complaint against its founder chairman Muniraju, his wife Pushpa Muniraj and Veena, a staffer.

In her complaint on March 12, the woman said the accused, particularly Muniraju, started sexually harassing her when she refused to bring fake patients whenever senior medical officers of the Medical Council of India came to the hospital on inspection.

"I have been working in the institute since April 1, 2014 and was forced to bring fake patients on many occasions. I came to know that it was an illegal activity and decided to stop bringing fake

Woman alleges harassment by senior citizen

Bengaluru: A 28-year-old woman has filed a police complaint, accusing a senior citizen of sexually harassing her in a BMTC bus on March 13.

The woman, a resident of BTM Layout, said the incident took place around 6.30pm. "When the bus arrived at 100 Feet Road, a man aged around 70 boarded it. I offered him the seat but he refused and stood near me. After some time, he started massaging my back and unbuttoned his trousers,"

she told police.

Embarrassed, she raised an alarm and other passengers began to scream at the old man. "The driver and conductor scolded him and stopped the bus. Without saying a word, the man got down and walked away," the woman said. "She filed the complaint two days after the incident and we spoke to the driver and the conductor. Based on their statements and the woman's complaint, we're on the lookout for the accused," Koramangala police said.

ones. But the accused trio started abusing and threatening me with dire consequences and finally went on to sex-

ually harass me for refusing their directives," she said.

As the complainant did not comply with their de-

mands, Muniraju allegedly stopped paying her. "They stopped my payment since I stopped bringing fake patients. They owe me Rs 6 lakh as outstanding salary," the complainant said.

Police said they have not arrested any of the accused. "We have to question them first," Devanahalli cops said.

When contacted, the complainant's family members told **STOI** that Veena had threatened "to throw acid on her face" for not heeding Muniraju's words. "We have documents to prove how the woman was forced to work under threatening conditions. When she refused to listen to the director, Veena threatened her with dire consequences, including an acid attack," a senior citizen from the woman's family said.

Docs raise concerns over SC order on antenatal scanning

State To Allow Six-Month Skill Qualification

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Bengaluru: MBBS doctors who will clear a six-month competency-based skill certification training in using ultrasound machines will be permitted to conduct antenatal scanning, officials have said citing a Supreme Court order passed earlier this week.

On March 14, the apex court had stayed the February 2016 Delhi high court order which scrapped a rule that allowed doctors clearing six-month course in ultrasound machines to conduct antenatal scanning. The high court had said the rule was violative of the Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (PNDCT) Act.

"From now, registered MBBS doctors can take up a six-month course to be conducted by the medical education department and obtain expertise in using the sonography machine to conduct antenatal scanning for pregnant women," said an officer from the state health and family welfare department.

The Indian Radiological and Imaging Association had moved the Delhi high court,

TIMES VIEW

The ongoing legal tussle over who can conduct antenatal scanning has given scope for more confusion than conclusion. The recent Supreme Court verdict has a far-reaching impact, not only on the medical fraternity but several pregnant women who are dependent on the test. A decision to allow MBBS doctors to do a course and use the equipment was taken to tackle the shortage of qualified radiologists. Now, the responsibility falls squarely on the government to ensure the course is good. It should listen to experts in the field and mandate an exam for these courses. In matters of health, there's no margin for errors.



stating that enlarging the category of persons authorised to operate ultrasound machines would lead to ineffective implementation of PNDT Act and the child sex ratio would continue to fall.

'Two-year course ideal'

The Centre had defended the rule, citing shortage of doctors with post-graduate qualification in radiology and growing demand of ultrasound services. However, radiologists expressed concerns over the qualification.

"Those who pass the entrance test for a PG seat in radiology and complete the course take nearly five years to start doing antenatal scan-

ning. Radiologists diagnose fetal anomalies through meticulous scanning and observation through ultrasound. How can just a course of some months be equated to the work of radiologists? The government must conduct a two-year course and the candidates who clear that must undergo one-year training under supervision," said Dr S Pradeep, HOD, department of radiology, Fortis Hospital.

Another city-based radiologist said the government has to design the course meticulously and not restrict it to just six months. "If any mistake is made by the doctor during antenatal scanning in analysing the fetal develop-

ment, there are chances of anomalies not being picked up before the fifth month of pregnancy and there are chances of a baby with anomalies being born. Post 20 weeks, a pregnant woman cannot go for medical termination of pregnancy in India. What if an anomaly is not noticed by such six-month trained doctor? It's the parents and the baby who would suffer," she said. The doctor added that such a move would lead to mushrooming of ultrasound antenatal scanning centres across the country and quality would suffer.

However, the move to train doctors is also seen as a positive step by some as many, including ayurveda doctors trained by radiologists, were conducting the scanning without any qualification.

'Conduct exam before certifying doctors'

Dr Umesh Krishnamurthy, vice-president, Indian Radiological and Imaging Association, who works in Bengaluru, said the government must mandate an exam for such courses whether it's done for six months or two years. "The doctor undergoing such a course must be thoroughly examined at the end of the course, before he/she is certified. Only then can such courses become effective," he said.