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# MBBS students to protest against NEXT exam tomorrow

Say the National Exit Test will be an additional burden

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** MBBS students from across the state will protest on Wednesday opposing to the proposed National Exit Test (NEXT). The students will be joined by the Indian Medical Association (IMA).

NEXT is part of the proposal mooted by the Union Health Ministry as part of the amendments to be introduced in the Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Act. According to the proposal, students are mandated to clear NEXT to obtain licence to practice.

Students believe that taking an entrance exam in addition to their MBBS exams would be taxing. Dr Manoop Kumaraswamy, member, Young Doctors' Association, IMA said, "What is the necessity for an exam when we are already preparing for NEET PG? Students will have to clear yet another exam. Instead, the government can just refine the existing

## Contentions

- Students who fail in NEXT must study one more year
- NEXT is not mandatory for foreign students
- 50% reservation for doctors who have worked in government health services means less opportunities for others

system. Besides, we are told that even Ayush doctors clearing this exam will be granted permission to prescribe allopathy medicines after a bridge course."

Dr Rajashekara Bellary, president, IMA Karnataka said, "Those who have cleared MBBS are expected to take the exam. What is the use of having studied the course for five-and-a-half years then? It is an unnecessary burden on students. Students will also lose faith in the system of study then."

In a memorandum, the students have said, "The examinations are conducted by universities which are recognised by University Grants Commission and MBBS examination is therefore rightfully a qualifying examination for the degree of Modern Medicine. Therefore, introducing NEXT as a qualifying examination is unnecessary and makes the university examination redundant."

They also say that converting a competitive examination into both a qualifying examination and competitive examination for post graduation is not in the students' interest as the structure and objective of a qualifying examination for admission to post graduation is different from a qualifying examination that is meant for assessing the minimum qualification required to receive the degree.

# Docs give rural postings a miss, 103 get notices

Times News Network

**Bengaluru:** Cracking the whip on doctors who are refusing to serve in rural areas, the state government has issued show-cause notices to 103 government doctors for prolonged absence from service.

According to rules, a qualified government postgraduate doctor has to serve the first year of his practice in a rural area, which most of the doctors facing action had refused. They had approached court against the norm, prompting the government action. Last year, the government had also offered them incentives, bringing their salary on a par with doctors in private hospitals, still nothing changed.

"Most of them enjoy the salary and remain silent

about their absence from the government hospitals. Show-cause notices were sent last week to find out what has gone wrong. If they fail to respond by January 31, we will dismiss them from service," said Subodh Yadav, commissioner, department of health and family welfare.

The situation is the same in every government-run hospital in the state, where patients don't get proper treatment in the absence of doctors. "Most doctors are either busy practicing privately and many simply neglect the government's transfer order to work in remote villages," said a senior health official.

About 70% of the primary health centres have no doctors or have irregular ones. Sources quote instances of doctors who have not reported for 1 year to 12 years, and



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**—Subodh Yadav** | COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE

“The government must make efforts to understand the reason behind their absence. Living conditions in rural Karnataka are pathetic, definite to make an urban doctor feel homesick, deprived of the basic necessities of life they are used to”  
**— A doctor who refused rural posting**

government hospitals never report to work. Dismissing such doctors was necessary. Sacking of the doctors will pave the way for recruitment of new ones,” said Kishore K, a retired government doctor, who worked in rural areas most of his life.

A young government doctor, who has refused to take up rural posting, however, said, “Instead of sacking doctors, the government must make efforts to understand the reason behind their absence. Living conditions in rural Karnataka are pathetic, definite to make an urban doctor feel homesick, deprived of the basic necessities of life they are used to. Though the entry-level doctors get a decent monthly salary of Rs 40,000 to Rs 50,000, their professional growth is uncertain.”

yet were on the records. Dr S R Ugaiwatt, a health officer in Bagalkot, has been issued a show-cause notice for remaining absent since 2006.

“Doctors being absent from duty among the major

reasons why most people don't find government hospitals reliable, with most preferring private hospitals even if they are expensive. Patients suffer immensely, especially in rural areas. Most doctors posted at



**PATIENT PAIN** Healthcare Suffers As Medical Institutions Evade Quality Recognition

# Only 119 of 4,000 K'taka hospitals have NABH tag, four are govt run

Sreemoyee Chatterjee@  
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**Bengaluru:** Of the about 4,000 hospitals across Karnataka, only 119 have National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) recognition. Set up in 2006 to establish and operate accreditation programme for healthcare organizations, NABH is a constituent board of Quality Council of India and recognizes hospitals based on quality of healthcare and patient safety.

Only 4 of the 119 NABH-recognized hospitals are government institutions.

City doctors say it is high time the regulatory authorities make NABH recognition mandatory for all hospitals in the state, which at present is only voluntary. The government must ensure all public and private hospitals are NABH-recognized and put in place a process which improves patients' safety, they felt.

NABH recognition is awarded in two levels — accreditation given to super specialty hospitals with five star facilities and certification to institutions with basic and advanced levels of quality care.

"Also, there is a need to create more awareness among patients about the importance of NABH accreditation so that they opt for hospitals which have the recognition. Treatment in a NABH-recognized hospital ensures quality care and patient safety," says Dr H Sudarshan Ballal, chairman, Manipal Hospitals.

| WHAT IS NABH?   |  | WHAT DOES THE RECOGNITION ENTAIL?  |   |   |  | NABH-RECOGNIZED HOSPITALS IN KARNATAKA  |  |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| <br><b>WHAT IS NABH?</b><br>NABH is a constituent board of Quality Council of India, set up to establish and operate accreditation programme for healthcare organizations. The board is structured to cater to the needs of patients and set benchmarks for progress of healthcare industry. The board has full functional autonomy in its operation.  | <br>Access, assessment & continuity of care | <br>Care of patients               | <br>Patient rights & education     | <br>Infection control  | <b>12</b><br>Hospitals in Karnataka that have pre-entry level recognition (basic quality & patient safety level) | <b>3</b><br>Hospitals with recognition in the progressive level (better quality and patient safety level compared to the basic entry level) |  |
|   | <br>Continuous quality improvement          | <br>Responsibilities of management | <br>Facilities management & safety | <br>Community participation & integration  |  |   |  |
| <b>QUALITY HEALTHCARE DOESN'T COME COSTLY</b><br><p>The general perception in the sector is that ensuring quality healthcare is expensive, which isn't true. NABH has introduced entry-level certification which helps address the crucial aspect of quality in healthcare at the grassroots level without major expenses. The state needs to incentivize and encourage quality certification of healthcare organizations, both private and government</p> <p>—Dr Alex Thomas   NABH BOARD MEMBER &amp; MEMBER SECRETARY OF TASK FORCE FOR KARNATAKA PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY</p> |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |
| <p>Gold status level accreditation is called accreditation while other recognitions are called certification</p>  |  |  |   | <br>Bengaluru's Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences & Research is state's only govt hospital to have gold status level |  |   |  |

## Fund, staff crunch key hurdles for govt hospitals

Lack of commitment, adequate staff and poor incentives are to blame for very few government hospitals going for NABH accreditation, say Bengaluru doctors.

"The major challenges government hospitals face in

meeting the eligibility criteria for NABH accreditation and certification are lack of adequate funds needed for better infrastructure and improved quality of services, inadequate staff and manpower to maintain services, documentation of procedures

and the several protocols to be eligible for recognition," says Dr C N Manjunath, director, Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research.

Dr Sunil Rao, VP (Operations) at Columbia Asia Hospital, says, "Policy changes in

terms of increasing staff strength should be looked into. The Gujarat and Tamil Nadu governments have made policy changes at the state level to push their hospitals, laboratories and primary healthcare centres for NABH accreditation."

Doctors also say that many private hospitals deliberately evade NABH recognition as patients demand cheaper treatment.

"Improving quality comes at a cost and sometimes it is compromised to cut costs," says Dr Vishal Rao US, oncologist at HCG Cancer Hos-

pital and member of the state's high-powered committee on tobacco control.

"NABH accreditation plays a crucial role in reducing medical errors in hospitals," says Dr C N Manjunath, director, Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research, the only government hospi-

tal in the state to get a gold status accreditation.

Doctors think incentivizing NABH-accredited hospitals will go a long way in ensuring patient safety. "Like in the US, if insurance companies and third parties here pay more for a procedure conducted in NABH-accredited hospitals than in other hospitals,

both hospitals and patients will go for the accreditation," says Dr Ballal.

"Also, with medical tourism flourishing, most hospitals will benefit if they are certified for quality standards because that will bring them not only local but also national and international patients," says Dr Rao.

## ದೇವರಾಜ ಅರಸು ಕಾಲೇಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಶೋಧನಾ ವಿಧಾನ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಗಾರ



ಕೋಲಾರ: ಶ್ರೀ ದೇವರಾಜ ಅರಸು ನರ್ಸಿಂಗ್ ಕಾಲೇಜು, ಟಿಮಕ, ಕೋಲಾರ ವತಿಯಿಂದ ದಿನಾಂಕ 24 ಮತ್ತು 25 ಜನವರಿ 2017 ರಂದು ಸಂಶೋಧನಾ ವಿಧಾನ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಗಾರವನ್ನು ಆಯೋಜಿಸಲಾಯಿತು.

ಶ್ರೀ ದೇವರಾಜ ಅರಸು ಉನ್ನತ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ಉಪಕುಲಪತಿಗಳಾದ ಡಾ. ಸಿ.ವಿ.ರಘುವೀರ್ ಮತ್ತು ನರ್ಸಿಂಗ್ ಕಾಲೇಜಿನ ಪ್ರಾಂಶುಪಾಲ ಡಾ.ಬಿ. ವಿಜಯಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮವನ್ನು ಉದ್ಘಾಟಿಸಿದರು. ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು, ಕೋಲಾರಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಮಾಲೂರು ಮತ್ತು ಚಿಂತಾಮಣಿಯ ಎಂಟು ನರ್ಸಿಂಗ್ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಿಂದ 250 ವಿಧ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳು ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಿದ್ದು ಈ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಗಾರದ ಪ್ರಯೋಜನ ಪಡೆದರು.

ನರ್ಸಿಂಗ್ ವಾರ್ಷಿಕ ಕ್ರಿಡಾಕೂಟವನ್ನು ಆಯೋಜಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು ಈ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಅತಿಥಿಗಳಾಗಿ ಶ್ರೀ ದೇವರಾಜ ಅರಸು ಉನ್ನತ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ಡಾ. ರಘುವೀರ್ ಸಿ.ವಿ, ಉಪಕುಲಪತಿ, ಕೋದಂಡರಾಮ, ಕಾರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್ ಮತ್ತು ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿ ವರ್ಗದವರು ಉಪಸ್ಥಿತರಿದ್ದರು. ವಿವಿಧವಾದ ಕ್ರೀಡೆಗಳನ್ನು ಆಯೋಜಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಲೇಜಿನ ವಿಧ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳು ಪಾಲ್ಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು.