IMA demands zero tolerance and stringent law against quackery

- Lack of awareness on the recognized and registrable systems of medicine
- Quacks endangering many lives due to zero knowledge

New Delhi, 15 June 2017: Amidst many cases of patients in print and electronic media every day, who have suffered major health setback or even died while receiving allopathic treatment from unqualified quacks, the IMA has demanded zero tolerance for quackery in the medical profession. The Association recently concluded the Dilli Chalo movement, where one of the major demands was the formulation of a stringent, central anti-quackery law.

Further, the IMA has urged that anyone who is not qualified or not registered, if practices a system of medicine, should be punishable for a term, which should extend up to ten years and with stringent fine. The recognized and registerable systems of medicine are modern medicine or Allopathy, Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy. All other unrecognized systems of medicine are illegal and cannot be practiced without permission of the institutional ethics committee and a registry under a clinical trial as prescribed in the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

Speaking on this, Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement, said, "It is a settled law that quacks are untrained and cannot diagnose or treat routine and emergency situations. They will invariably miss the diagnosis of acute heart attack, paralysis, meningitis, early cancer, early rheumatoid arthritis, appendicitis, acute abdomen, acute pregnancy situations, dissection of aorta, pulmonary embolism, etc., leading to high mortality and morbidity. Their modus operandi is based on referral practice to corporate set ups with a desire of getting commissions. It takes over a decade for a modern medicine doctor to acquire sufficient knowledge to decide which antibiotic should be prescribed in a certain situation and which should be avoided. It’s not mathematics. One cannot learn medicine via Google or following the prescriptions of modern medicine doctors. Every case is different and therefore, treatment should be individualized according to a particular patient."

Additionally, the Association feels that most preventable deaths can be traced to ignoring warning signals or self-prescriptions or relying on medicines by quacks or chemists. It further put forth that
all registered practitioners should fearlessly indicate: 'I am proud to be a qualified and registered doctor' and 'I am not a quack who lives on cuts and commissions'.

Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, "Lack of awareness among state governments, the legislature(s), judiciary, and doctors themselves regarding the danger posed by quacks and about non-entitlement of practitioners of Indian Medicine and various contradictory government and court orders have compounded the problem of quackery. All this has put the health of the people especially the poor, critically ill, women, and children, at stake. The need of the hour is to act against quacks wherever any of us come across them."

IMA urges one and all to beware of quacks as they indulge in cuts and commissions, will never refer the patient in time, invariably give steroids in every case, and will over investigate the patient to appear genuine. On the other hand, one should have faith in registered and qualified doctors as they do not indulge in unethical practices, do not take or give commissions, work with the primary aim and dharma of healing and not financial gain, believe in Karma and not Kriya, and will always guide patients with the best of interest.

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**About IMA**: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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