Over 70,000 doctors participate in the Indian Medical Association’s Dilli Chalo movement

Deliberate on key issues ailing the medical community including the increasing incidence of violence against doctors, unfair nature of the PC PNDT Act, need for compensation capping

New Delhi, 6 June 2017: In what was perhaps the largest peaceful Satyagraha against the many issues confronting the medical fraternity in the country, doctors, MBBS students, and others associated with the profession participated in huge numbers in the Dilli Chalo movement held today.

The movement was a fitting conclusion to the intensive month-long campaign by IMA aimed at raising awareness on and bringing to light the issues faced by the medical profession. IMA is a unified voice and the collective consciousness of the medical profession in the country.

The Protest March started at 8:00 AM from Rajghat and reached the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium by 11:00 AM. Earlier, the office bearers paid homage to the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi at 6:30 AM.

Over 70,000 doctors from all over India participated in the event including representatives of National Medical Associations such as Federation of Obstetrics & Gynecological Societies of India (FOGSI), Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP), Association of Physicians of India (API) and the Cardiological Society of India (CSI) amongst others. Those not present in person joined the movement digitally over a live webcast.

Speaking at the deliberations, 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, "This is one of the toughest times for the medical fraternity. This Satyagraha comes after the realization that enough is enough, and that repeated pleas and appeals by the medical fraternity have materialized into nothing but reassurances. The agitation among doctors has been evident for a long time now. New draconian acts imposing penal provisions on clerical errors and violations of clauses not linked to medical treatment under the PC PNDT Act and West Bengal Clinical Establishment Act are not in the interest
of the profession and therefore, the society at large. The need of the hour is collective action and decision which would do justice to this profession."

The last few months have seen several other initiatives by the IMA on this front such as STOP NMC Sathyagraha, two National Protest Days against violence on doctors, NO to NEXT strike in medical colleges, and the National Black Day against West Bengal Clinical Establishments Act. Other than this, 3 action committee meetings and 2 meetings of Federation of Medical Associations of India were also conducted.

Adding further, Dr Marthanda Pillai, Past President, IMA and Dr Ravi Wankhedkar, President Elect, IMA, in a joint statement, said, “It is imperative for both doctors and patients to understand that their relationship is a sacred one and that the dignity of the profession needs to be upheld. It won’t be wrong to say that justice has been denied to doctors even within the framework of the constitution of India. This movement should not be misconstrued as a strike or an agitation of any kind. Its sole aim is to serve as a wake-up call to the government and take urgent action."

Addressing the huge gathering of medical professionals, Dr Vinay Aggarwal (Past President IMA) and Dr R V Asokan, Chairman, Action Committee, added, "This protest is an indication that medical professionals will no longer take any form of injustice. People are indulging in violence against doctors, which is further being condoned by governments and other institutions. Prescription rights of doctors are being trampled upon, which can have disastrous consequences for patients. There is absolutely no end to the injustice being heaped upon the medical fraternity and this noble profession. This movement should be enough to urge the government to take urgent action failing which the agitation is only bound to increase."

The Dilli Chalo movement aimed to address the following demands by the medical fraternity.

- Criminal prosecution of medical negligence and clerical errors to be an exception
- Stringent central act against violence on doctors
- Capping the compensation in Consumer Protection Act (CPA) on doctors
- Professional autonomy in treatment and prescriptions
- Amendments in PC PNDT, Central Clinical Establishment Act (CEA), West Bengal CEA Act
- No unscientific mixing of systems of medicine
- Empower MBBS graduates
- One drug - One company - One price
- Implement inter-ministerial committee recommendations in six weeks
- Single window accountability
- Single window registration of doctors and medical establishments
- No to NMC: Amend Indian Medical Council (IMC) Act to maintain professional autonomy
- Uniform final MBBS exam instead of ‘NEXT’
- Uniform service conditions for service doctors & faculty
- Same work - Same pay - Pay parity - No to adhocism
• Fair conduction of NEET exam
• IMA member in every government health committee
• Central anti-quackery law
• Reimbursement of emergency services provided by private sector
• 25000 family medicine PG seats
• Aided hospitals and retainer ship in general practice
• Health budget of 5% of GDP for universal health coverage

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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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