IMA stands in solidarity with junior doctors on strike in Poland

New Delhi 16 October 2017: Junior doctors in Poland are on hunger strike protesting the poor pay and conditions including poor healthcare funding. Supporting their protest, the World Medical Association (WMA) delegates passed an emergency resolution on October 13, 2017 expressing serious concern about the dispute at the annual assembly of the Association in Chicago. The resolution also urged the Prime Minister of Poland to intervene and negotiate an acceptable solution and further said, ‘It is essential that a resolution is found before these physicians suffer irreversible harm, or die, as they seek to improve working conditions for their colleagues and a better financial basis for health care provision for the population’.

According to the Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists, they made several appeals, unsuccessfully, to the Government to take action on all the above issues; hence, the hunger strike. The current level of expenditure did not cover the justified needs of the population and was insufficient to ensure proper working conditions for health care professionals.

Commenting on this, Padma Shri Awardee Dr KK 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, “As part of WMA, the IMA supports the Junior doctors in Poland. Our demands are also similar. Health care spending in India too needs attention as India continues to be among the countries with the lowest relative public expenditure on healthcare. This is very evident from the Union budget for the year 2017-18, which has allocated only 1.3% of the GDP for healthcare. The National Health Policy 2017 has proposed increasing public health expenditure to 2.5% of the GDP. But this is just not enough. Every citizen of this country has a right to receive affordable or free preventive and emergency health care and the best of treatment. The health budget should be 5% of the GDP for universal health coverage. No to adhocism, pay parity and uniform service conditions for service doctors all across India is another of our major demand.”

Indian Medical Association (IMA) 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. IMA represents the collective consciousness of over 3 lakh
Adding further Dr KK Aggarwal said, “In addition to these, there are several important issues and concerns of doctors that need to be addressed urgently. Criminal prosecution of doctors, increasing violence against doctors, uncapped compensation in negligence cases, unrealistic laws like CEA and PCPNDT, to name a few. Doctors are feeling insecure and live in fear of criminal prosecution or violence. IMA has been fighting for a solution to these problems and had organized the "Dilli Chalo" movement on 6th June this year followed by a Dawn to Dusk fast on 2nd October to bring to the attention of the nation the many problems faced by the doctors today. We had also published an open letter to the Prime Minister prior to the fast seeking his immediate intervention in resolving these issues to better protect the health of the public, which we still await. We also hope that the WMA also passes a resolution supporting our demands.”

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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.

**For further information please contact:**
Sanjeev Khanna - 9871079105
Md Adib Ahmad – 9873716235
mediaimahq@gmail.com
IMA Public & Media Advocacy Cell