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Medical Students In Mumbai Ask Health Ministry To Equalize UG And PG Seats

Recently, Over 300 medical students gathered at Indian Medical Association House (IMA) to once again plead to the Union Health Ministry to equalize Under Graduation (UG) and Post Graduation (PG) medical seats. The movement by the medical students called 'Save the Doctor' also took place in other cities like Bangalore, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mysore, Guwahati and Hisar, on the same day. Dressed in their regular lab coats along with a black ribbon, the students made their hand impression on a large piece of canvas as a symbolic gesture to articulate the lack of specialist doctors in the country. The students also wrote their message 'Save the Doctors' on the floor as each alphabet was lit with candles.

The top ten causes of death in India include diseases of the heart, diarrheal disease, chronic respiratory diseases and strokes, to name a few. Nine out of the ten require specialist doctors to treat them. Today, India lacks specialist doctors due to inadequate number of PG seats in medical institutions. Though the country has the largest number of medical institu-



tions, the disparity in the number of seats allotted for PG and UG-students along with the mandatory rural posting are affecting young doctors, as they end up spending 13 years merely studying. This also means that the future of our healthcare system is at a huge risk if the current scenario continues. As senior spe-

cialist doctors/ surgeons retire in the future, there will be a dearth of specialist doctors and surgeons in India. Pursuing a Post Graduation in any stream of medicine is essential for a doctor to become a specialist such as Gynecologist, Neurologist, Surgeon, Radiologist etc.

There are 47,600 UG seats which is likely to reach 50,000 shortly due to the progressive steps taken by the MCI, whereas, there are only 12,000 PG seats in clinical disciplines. In the last PG entrance exam under NEET, over 90,000 doctors appeared for the test to claim one of the 12,000 seats. Adding to this, the one year compulsory rural posting as a pre-requisite to apply for PG course has worsened the situation.

'Save the Doctor' movement started by the medical graduates and students across India, with the support of Association of Healthcare Providers (AHP) and Indian Medical Association (IMA) was commenced in Bangalore on July 29, 2013. This was followed by a large gathering at New Delhi, where

about 3000 medical students came together for the cause. A candle light march was then held last week at Jaipur which saw a participation of over 800 medical students.

