

IMA Hospital Board of India

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Press Statement

IMA Hospital Board of India unequivocally rejects the West Bengal Clinical Establishment (Registration, Regulation and Transparency) Bill 2017 as misuse of state power and an example to other states of what a legislation ought not to be. It is a law given to populism and without indication of any mind application. Having failed in all fronts in public health and with worst health parameters in the country the state Government has taken vengeance against the private hospitals to hide its monumental failures.

No Government is entitled to prescribe protocols for treatment. It is the sole prerogative of the medical profession. This is a dynamic area which has to be updated every day. Straight jacketing treatment by Government protocols will sooner than later jeopardise the life of patients.

The state Government has failed miserably in not studying the cost input into private health care. Without even a semblance of a professional costing how can a Government irrationally decide treatment rates and charges? What the Government has done is an affront to the constitution. If the Government is so concerned with for profit hospitals, it defies reason why it has failed to show any consideration to clinics and small and medium hospitals run by doctors. These clinical institutions are friendly neighbourhood establishments accessible and affordable to people.

Sermonising that hospitals are a service and not commerce is not enough. Government should follow it up in proclaiming hospitals as services sector and declare benefits accordingly. This is exactly what the profession has been demanding sofar. Declare hospitals as professional service. Remove hospitals from the Shops and Commercial Establishment Act. Hospital can neither come under Industries nor under Industrial Disputes Act. Water and Electricity tariff to hospitals are the same as 5 star hotels. An institution of service should get water and electricity at reduced rates.

The proviso of the act are imposing an inspector raj and the licences of the hospitals can be cancelled every time there is a death to satisfy a politician or two. To include medical negligence under criminal jurisprudence is unjust. At no time in a treatment there is an intention to kill the patient or there is no mens rhea. Moreover the Supreme Court has clearly laid down clear guidelines in this regard in the Jacob Mathews case. Enough legal remedies are already available for the patients.

This law has no moral right to exist in statute. This will be a deterrent to development of this important sector. We demand immediate repeal of this act. If the state Government is still insisting to implement the same, it is well advised to nationalise the entire sector rather than do bodily harm to our hospitals.

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Dr Jayesh Lele

Secretary IMA Hospital Board of India