

Health Minister's action at GMC sparks protest

After Rane suspends CMO, medical forums stand with doctor; min clears the air later

Team Herald

PANJIM: Health Minister Vishwajit Rane on Saturday ordered the suspension of Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Rudresh Kuttikar at the Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC), Bambolim, for allegedly behaving rudely with patients.

The action followed a surprise visit by the Minister to the GMC. Rane stated that the suspension was based on a complaint received from a journalist regarding the doctor's conduct.

Accompanied by a group of video journalists during his visit, the Minister instructed GMC officials to issue the suspension order by Sunday. He announced that Dr Rudresh would be

RANE ISSUES CLARIFICATION ON INCIDENT

Late on Saturday, Health Minister Vishwajit Rane put out a clarification on social media, maintaining that he would not apologise for "standing up for a patient who was denied care" but admitted his tone could have been more measured. "Yes, as the Health Minister, I did intervene and I accept that my tone and words could have been more measured. I'm not above reflection or criticism. I take full responsibility for how I communicated, and I assure you, such an approach will not be repeated," he said.

"However, what I will not apologise for is standing up for a patient who was denied

care. Doctors hold a noble position in society, and most of them at GMC serve with great dedication. But when arrogance seeps into duty, when compassion is replaced with indifference, it is my responsibility to take action," Rane added. He highlighted public frustration when basic care is delayed at GMC and stressed that corrective actions should be supported.

"I did what I did in defence of a helpless, elderly woman. And I will continue to speak up, act, and fight for the rights of every patient who walks into our hospital," he asserted.

suspended for two years pending an inquiry.

Videos of the visit, including the suspension moment, have since gone viral on social media, prompting

mixed reactions from the public.

Reacting sharply to the suspension, the Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) has demand-

ed an immediate public apology from the Health Minister to the CMO and healthcare workers present at the scene and has also called for an independent

inquiry into the alleged misuse of authority.

"If no action is taken within the next 72 hours, FAIMA will be compelled to launch a nationwide agitation, including mass protests, symbolic black-badge duties, and legal redress," said FAIMA national president Dr Akshay Dongardive.

The Indian Medical Association (IMA), Goa State Branch, also strongly condemned the Minister's actions.

"The IMA is deeply disturbed and disappointed by the circulating video that clearly shows the Health Minister suspending a senior doctor from the emergency department without giving him a chance to present his side," said IMA State president Dr Dattaram Desai.

Bastora assault: Bail order adjourned

Team Herald

MAPUSA: The District and Additional Sessions Court-II, Mapusa, on Saturday adjourned the bail applications of three men arrested in connection with the brutal assault of a couple at the Bastora junction on Monday, June 9.

The matter will now be re-argued before the newly appointed District Judge-II and Additional Sessions Judge, Apurva Nagvenkar, following the transfer of District Judge and Additional Sessions Judge Ram Prabhudessai.

Mapusa Police, who are conducting the investigation, have so far arrested Adv Kaushal Shetye (32), Ranganath Shetye (55), and Vinod Shetye alias Shetkar (47), all residents of Tambdi Mati, Moira. They have been accused of assaulting Vivek Shirodkar and his wife Shruti, residents of Natchinola, on the night of June 2.

The trio have been remanded in police custody for five days and will be produced before the Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC), Mapusa, on Monday for further remand.

Police are still on the lookout for other assailants involved in the attack, who remain at large. The weapons used in the crime are yet to be recovered, and investigators are probing the source from which the weapons were procured.

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El Dourado traders seek independent inspection of barricaded building

Team Herald

PANJIM: The ten traders occupying the El Dourado building, which has been cordoned off by the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP), have urged the competent authority to allow them to inspect the building through an independent technical expert.

The request was made by Adv Raunaq Rao, representing the traders during the hearing of the appeal before Secretary (Urban Development) Sanjay Goel, IAS, who is also the competent authority, on Friday.

The matter has been adjourned for an order on June 13.

Adv Rao said, "We have requested the competent authority to give us a chance to inspect the building through an independent technical expert. The CCP has barricaded the building based on the report of the Goa Engineering College, Farmagudi, and we were not given the chance to file ob-

jections. Also, our premises have not been inspected from inside. We are condemned without being heard."

Adv Rao further pointed out that, since the time of the erstwhile Panjim Municipal Council, notices have been issued to traders asking them to vacate the premises. He recalled that in 1990, technical expert Karandikar had certified that the building was safe and stable for the next 44 years. The building was constructed in 1969.

He stated that in October last year, the CCP carried out a structural analysis of the building secretly and without informing the traders. Not a single premises was inspected from the inside.

Earlier, on May 27, the competent authority declined to stay the impugned order of the CCP Commissioner dated May 21, directing traders to vacate the building. However, the ten traders have filed a writ petition challenging the order passed by the authority.

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