

State spends ₹30L per MBBS

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The government on Sunday hit back at the striking junior doctors, detailing the money it spent on each of them.

Officials said that the government spent around ₹40 lakh on a postgraduate doctor (MD/MS specialised doctor) and also gave a stipend ranging from ₹2.1 lakh to ₹2.4 lakh per annum while doctors-in-the-making paid only around ₹10,600 per annum as fees.

Medical education was highly subsidised in the state with the government spending around ₹30 lakh per MBBS student in state-run medical colleges. Health minister Dr D.L. Ravindra Reddy said that despite these facilities, junior doctors of government teaching hospitals often went on strike demanding hikes in stipends and cribbed about mandatory rural service. Compared to this, students of private medical colleges spent several lakhs from their pocket, but did not resort to strikes etc. he said.

Junior doctors, on the other hand, claimed that the government was playing vote bank politics with mandatory rural services

instead of filling permanent posts by providing jobs to full-fledged MD/MS doctors.

The health minister said, "The government spends a lot on each doctor, gives them stipends but still they complain about rural service. They actually do rural service in the PHCs for a year after MBBS and need to spend another year in Area/District Hospitals post completion of MD/MS. It's their duty to serve the poor there and also to train themselves. As for stipends, the doctors can opt for a residency system as per Government Order 132 or they may ask for an

increase in monthly stipends and benefits as per Government Order 287."

However, the PG doctors claimed that they weren't averse to rural service post MBBS but they did not want it as a mandatory contract service after PG by signing a bond of ₹20 lakh. Dr Karthik Bharadwaj, a PG doctor from OGH said, "Instead of putting academic restrictions, the government can place those doctors who want permanent postings in Area/District hospitals since there're many vacancies. There are many doctors who want to join government service."

STATE HITS BACK AT STRIKING DOCS

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■ A stipend ranging from ₹2.1 lakh to ₹2.4 lakh per annum

■ Government spending around ₹30 lakh per MBBS student

■ It's their duty to serve the poor



Junior doctors on strike