

# Medicos to get 2-yr rural stint

DC CORRESPONDENTS

HYDERABAD

**Dec. 16:** The health minister, Dr D.L. Ravindra Reddy, said on Thursday that the government might increase the rural mandatory minimum stay of medical graduates from one year to two years.

Admitting that there was a shortage of trained medical staff in rural areas, the minister said that the government was hopeful of addressing the issue through initiatives like extending the compulsory stay.

It is compulsory for all MBBS and BDS graduates to work as junior residents in rural medical and dental service for one year immediately after completion of their course. Medical students have, meanwhile, strongly opposed the government's proposal and have threatened to launch a state-wide agitation if the government went ahead with the proposal.

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protest

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already issued orders making one-year rural service mandatory for students who took admission in the ongoing academic year 2010-11. With this, it will take seven years to obtain an MBBS degree. The long duration will be very difficult for students, particularly women," said Dr Raghu Kishore, president, Gandhi Medical College Junior Doctors Association.

Ms Akshara Rao, medico at Osmania Medical College said, "There are no facilities at PHCs in rural areas. Even, if we are deputed there, there is nothing we can do without proper equipment and facilities, she said.