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IMA/TN/Sec/Cbe/GOV/032/2020 Dated 21/04/2020

To

Thiru. Edappadi.K.Palaniswami,

Hon'ble Chief Minister

Government of Tamil Nadu.

Sub : Difficulties faced by the Medical Fraternity - Appeal for Action by the Government

Greetings,

This is further to our previous **communication dated 21.04.2020 vide our Ref**

No. IMA/TN/Sec/Cbe/GOV/031/2020 dated 20/04/2020.

At the foremost, we appreciate the steps taken by the Government of Tamil Nadu under your able guidance in the fight against pandemic Covid 19.

At the first instance, this representation is intended to bring to your kind notice certain important issues faced by the Doctors and other Health Care Professionals who are involved in the fight against Covid 19.

We have stated them below for your kind perusal and action.

1. RIGHT OF A DIGNIFIED BURIAL:

The mob incited violence against the body of Dr. Simon on 20.04.2020 was not only shocking but also blatantly against various sections of the law including violating the prohibitory orders under Section 144 that are in place.

Before detailing on the issues faced by Doctors and other Health Care Professionals, we thank the Government for acting swiftly in arresting the culprits who attacked and prevented the last rights of the doctor who was working in the front line in treating Covid 19 patients.

Sir, as Doctors we are committed to our duty in treating the patients during the pandemic periods and in the performance of our duty towards society. Doctors are facing severe difficulties from the public in and around our houses, physical attacks on Doctors, deprivation of the fundamental rights, false propaganda against Doctor and severe mental stress from the Media and at times from the Department of Health Care also.

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SUPPORT YOUR IMA TO SUPPORT YOU

Sir, in this context it just and necessary to point that right from the outbreak of the pandemic, Doctors have been working tirelessly in creating awareness and in also treating the patients infected. It is humbly submitted that while returning to home after treating the patients, the Doctors and other health care professionals are being stopped from entering into their houses on the pretext that since they had treated patients infected with virus the same can be spread by them. Such, act of obstruction by the public causes severe mental agony and stress to the Doctors and health care professionals. Even, in the case of doctors who have expired due to infection, brutal attacks are being carried on the Doctors and Health Care Professionals. In this regard it is pertinent to mention that the general presumption that the Doctors who treat the Covid 19 patients will also be affected by the virus needs to be eradicated by creating proper awareness. Since, Doctors and other health care professionals strictly follow the guidelines issued by the Government from time to time in taking safety measures while treating the patients.

Sir, in order to avert any further unfortunate incidents during the disposal of the corpse of either Doctors or the general public who succumbed to Covid 19, the State Government, in consonance with the WHO recommendations, passed **G.O (Ms).No.178** dated 08.04.2020, enlisting its comprehensive instructions/guidelines on dead body management infested with COVID- 19. Though the said Government Order is strictly followed in the disposal of the dead body the same needs to be educated to the general public as well in order to eradicate the fear in the minds of the general public.

Sir, in order to ensure the safety of the Doctors and other health professionals, stringent action is to be taken on the miscreants who make false propaganda as if the disposal of the dead body would result in spread of the pandemic in that particular area. It is pertinent to mention that Doctors and other health care professionals face similar false propaganda by the miscreants as if a particular Doctor or health care professional is infected by the virus though the fact is otherwise, which results in severe social stigma on the Doctors and the other health care professionals and their entire professional and their families are boycotted by the general public. Such spread of false news on assumptions and presumptions should be prohibited and strict action is to be initiated against such miscreants who indulge in such acts under the Sections 188 of the Indian Penal Code.

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The Honble Madras high Court in Suo Motto W.P.No.7492 of 2020 has held

“That the scope and ambit of Article 21 includes right to have a decent burial. It prima facie appears that s a consequence of the above said alleged acts, a person who practiced a noble profession as a doctor and breathed his last, has been deprived of his right, to have a burial, in a cemetery earmarked for that purpose and that apart, on account of law and order and public order problem created, the officials who have performed their duties appeared have sustained grievous injuries.”

We need a definite protocol from the Govt for a Honoured , Dignified Cremation of the Body of the Health Care Professionals who sacrifice their life in the Fight against CORONA

Family of all the health care professionals who sacrifice their life also have the right to get the State Government Relief fund

2. VIOLENCE AGAINST DOCTORS/MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS:

In the case of violence/attacks against doctors that have been prevalent, the violators are to be punished under Sections 3 and 5 of the Tamilnadu Medicare service persons and Medicare Medicare service Institutions (Prevention of Violence and Damage of loss of Property) Act 2008 (Act No.48.).

We seek the State Govt to Refer to the centre for the central Act for the violence against doctors/medical professionals

3. SEALING OF HOSPITALS WHERE DOCTORS HAVE BEEN INFECTED BY COVID 19:

Doctors are working on the frontline of the Covid 19 pandemic against all odds and in strict adherence to the Government orders including GO (Ms) 181, issued by the Public Health and Family Welfare Department on 08.04.2020, wherein all hospitals established under clinical establishment act, 1997 are bound to offer services to the patients. Moreover, the G.O lays down strict action for those establishments which refuses to treat patients.

However, in circumstances where a doctor/nurse having contracted Covid 19 in the course of treating patients, some hospitals/Nursing homes in the state of Tamilnadu have been sealed by health officials.

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This act not only causes panic among the local populace but also comes in the way of many patients losing the opportunity to be treated in the said hospitals/Nursing homes especially in rural areas. Furthermore a stigma is cast upon such hospitals that are sealed despite strict Covid 19 disinfection protocols being in place.

We submit that the closure of such Medical facilities will not in any way help in arresting the pandemic but on the other hand only curtails the availability of medical facilities to the public at large with the growing number of cases.

Therefore, sealing Hospitals in the wake of doctors being infected should be addressed immediately forthwith with a definite protocol and information to media by the Authorities must be discouraged.

Thanking you,
With warm regards,



Dr.C.N.Raja
President IMA TNSB



Dr.A.K.Ravikumar
Hony.Secretary IMA TNSB

Copy Submitted to:
Health Minister
Chief Secretary
Health Secretary
DGP