

GOVERNMENT CLARIFIES ON THE ISSUE OF SUPERANNUATION AGE OF DOCTORS

Attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-items relating to warning to intensify the symbolic protest by NIDA in connection with the issue of superannuation age of doctors that appeared in certain sections of media today, the 31st March 2021.

In this connection, it is clarified that that the matter was considered by the Cabinet in its meeting held on 14.01.2021 wherein it was decided to *discuss the matter with NSF by Cabinet Sub-Committee in the first instance*. The Cabinet Sub-Committee has had discussions with NSF and other stakeholders since then, and the matter is under active consideration of the Government at the Cabinet level.

The fact that the 2020-21 financial year, on account of the prevailing COVID pandemic, had forced the Government to take stringent measures to check its expenditures, including by way of banning of fresh appointments is also pertinent.

Detailed facts were placed before the office bearers of NIDA and the need to allow the consultative process to be completed for a robust decision was highlighted in the various meetings that the Chief Minister, the Minister for Health & Family Welfare, the Chief Secretary Nagaland and the Principal Secretary Health & Family Welfare has had with the NIDA officials. However, it is noted with regret that NIDA has not taken cognizance of the counsel given and the genuine appeal to withdraw the symbolic protest.

It may also be pertinent to point out that the Government has taken a number of steps towards improving the service conditions of doctors including creation of 1 post of Director (Dental) in 2019 and in 2020 created 134 posts of various categories of doctors (Director (ME&RS:1; ZLO: 5, DVBO: 8; Specialist: 68; MO: 44; Dental Surgeon: 3 & AYUSH MO: 11), encadrement of 2 posts of DVBO in 2020, restructuring eligibility criteria for promotion to enable senior officers to qualify for promotion by reducing the tenure requirements in the higher grade, approving setting up of two Medical Colleges, and development of health infrastructure in the State.

The Government is committed to improve the health infrastructure and better service conditions for government medical professionals with the objective of improved public health delivery. However, the Government has to examine the matter in all its dimensions through the consultative

process, keeping in view the legal and administrative complexities on account of the specific conditions of the state.

It is urged that NIDA, knowing fully that the matter is under active consideration and to be taken up by the Cabinet and other facts as highlighted above, should have refrained from making such public statements and should withdraw their protest, which does not in any way help in resolving the matter under consideration.

(DIPR)