

# NHRC NOTICE TO GOVT OVER KEONJHAR DENGUE DEATHS

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, Dec 1:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a notice to the Principal Secretary of the state Health & Family Welfare (H&FW) department, seeking a detailed report on the lack of healthcare facilities in Keonjhar district.

The notice was prompted by a petition filed by rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy.

The apex human rights panel of India passed the order last week, following concerns raised by the petitioner about the dire condition of health-

care in Keonjhar, where residents are reportedly dying of dengue due to inadequate care and treatment at the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) and medical college.

Keonjhar is the home district of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

The petition highlighted a news report from October 2, which detailed the death of 37-year-old Biri Biswakarma October 1 due to dengue, alongside several other affected residents.

Tripathy argued that despite the presence of a medical college and a super-specialty



district hospital, poor tribal patients often die without proper treatment or are referred to facilities in other regions.

Keonjhar, one of India's highest mining royalty-paying dis-

tricts with substantial contributions to the District Mineral Foundation (DMF), still suffers from inadequate public health-care funding.

Tripathy contended that

**The petitioner highlighted how, despite the presence of a medical college and a super-specialty district hospital, poor tribal patients often die without proper treatment**

blood samples have to be sent to Cuttack or Bhubaneswar to confirm the presence of the dengue virus, a time-consum-

ing process that has led to an increase in deaths.

The complainant urged the commission to intervene and take remedial action to safeguard the health and lives of residents. The petition also referenced a Supreme Court ruling that recognises the right to health as part of the fundamental right to life under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution.

The NHRC has directed the authorities to take necessary action and submit a report within four weeks. A copy of the order has been sent to the Chief Secretary for further action and information.

## **NMC notice to 198 medical colleges for not sharing info on stipends to medics**

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/thesundaystandard/2024/Dec/01/nmc-notice-to-198-medical-colleges-for-not-sharing-info-on-stipends-to-medics>

Most medical colleges and institutions violating the norms are located in Telangana, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Kavita Bajeli-Datt Updated on: 01 Dec 2024, 9:05 am

NEW DELHI: The National Medical Commission (NMC) has issued show cause notices to 198 government and private medical colleges and institutions for not sharing information about stipends paid to undergraduate interns, postgraduate residents and senior residents.

While a whopping 115 government medical colleges and institutions failed to submit information on stipends paid to interns and junior and senior residents, as many as 83 private colleges also did not submit the details.

Most medical colleges and institutions violating the norms are located in Telangana, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Among the prestigious institutions that failed to comply with the NMC order include Delhi's Maulana Azad Medical College and Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Medical Sciences, and Dr RML Hospital.

The move came only after the Supreme Court ordered NMC to submit the details of stipends paid to the medical interns and residents.

Following this, the NMC directed these health institutions and medical colleges to submit the stipend details to their UG interns, PG residents and senior residents or PGs in the super speciality for 2023-24 and 2024-25 on their websites every month.

However, as many failed to submit the information on time, the NMC issued a show cause as to "why penal action should not be taken against them for their failure to submit the information/details of the stipend paid."

In a letter dated November 28, NMC Secretary Dr B Srinivas said the "defaulting medical colleges are directed to furnish the data relating payment of stipend during 2023-24 on the dedicated email ID immediately and within the next 3 days from the issue of this show cause notice."

Twelve government medical colleges and institutions in Telangana and Rajasthan failed to submit the details on a stipend. It was followed by states like Maha (11), Karnataka (10), Tamil Nadu and Kerala (6 each), and Jammu and Kashmir (5), Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Jharkhand (4 each).

Similarly, the maximum number of violators among private medical colleges and institutions was from Telangana. As many as 13 such institutes failed to submit information on paid stipends to these interns and residents. It is followed by Karnataka (10), Maharashtra (9), Tamil Nadu (8), Uttar Pradesh (8), Gujarat (7), Andhra Pradesh (6) and Kerala (4).

As many interns and resident doctors associations, including FAIMA and FORDA, had raised the matter of medical colleges and institutions not paying interns and residents stipends despite making them work round the clock, the NMC surveyed to ascertain the amount paid to UG/PG students last year. This step came only after the directions of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). The NMC had promised to keep the identity of the participants confidential.

The survey showed that of the over 7,000 PG students, 2,000 did not receive stipends, most of which were from private colleges. Following the survey findings, the NMC warned these private medical colleges that action would be taken against them if they failed to pay their wages to them.

When RTI activist Dr K V Babu filed an RTI with the NMC on what action they had taken in this regard against the private medical colleges following the survey findings, the NMC refused to share the information, stating that it was based on "third party" and exempted as per section 8(1) (g) of RTI Act, 2005. Dr Babu filed an appeal, which was dismissed similarly by the NMC.

"The NMC, which refused to share the details of medical colleges' not paying PG stipend, has directed them to upload the details of the stipend paid! They're falling in line now because of the SC ruling," Dr Babu told this paper.

"The NHRC, in its direction of March 2023, have clearly instructed the NMC to deregister the private medical colleges refusing to clear the arrears of interns from 1st July 2021. But NMC has failed to do so. They issue warnings but don't take concrete steps," he said.

Not just a stipend, but there is a disparity in the amount given to these interns and residents. The stipend for PG students varies from one state medical hospital to another. It ranges from Rs. 45,000 to Rs. 95,000. However, private medical colleges and hospitals pay PG students even less than Rs. 25,000; some pay them in instalments.

## Delhi s homeless stare at another winter of discontent

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/delhis-homeless-stare-at-another-winter-of-discontent/article68936081.ece>

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Soibam Rocky Singh

With the onset of winter in the Capital, the lack of accurate and updated data on the homeless population poses a challenge for authorities involved in rehabilitation work.

The last official survey conducted in 2014 by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) — the nodal agency for improving the quality of the life of slum dwellers — estimated 16,760 homeless individuals in the city.

However, the figure was widely criticised by NGOs and experts for being “grossly underreported”.

### ‘Drastic increase’

A recent headcount by the NGO Shahri Adhikar Manch: Begharon Ke Saath, an organisation working for uplift of the homeless, conducted between August 27 and 31, 2024, found 1,54,369 individuals, including women, children, and elderly, living on the streets of Delhi.

“The figure highlights a drastic increase in homelessness in the city, driven by the increasing demolition of houses by State agencies, continued neglect of the issues of the homeless, and the failure of housing schemes in benefitting the most vulnerable population,” the NGO said.

According to the Centre for Holistic Development (CHD), another NGO that works with those living on the streets, 180 homeless succumbed to cold last winter.

The CHD had also claimed that at least 192 homeless people died between June 11 and 19 this year due to heatwave.

Acting on the report, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) had issued notice to the Delhi government.

“It is imperative to identify the homeless. Suppose they die due to the elements of nature or accident or starvation... in that case, their deaths can be acknowledged and all aspects of neglect can be known,” Sunil Kumar Aledia, executive director of CHD, told The Hindu.

The DUSIB manages around 197 shelter homes across Delhi, providing services like drinking water and mobile toilets to 7,092 people. As part of the Winter Action Plan this year, 250 temporary shelter homes in pagoda tents will be set up to accommodate around 2,000 people. However, Mr. Aledia points out that the shelter homes fall far short of the actual need.