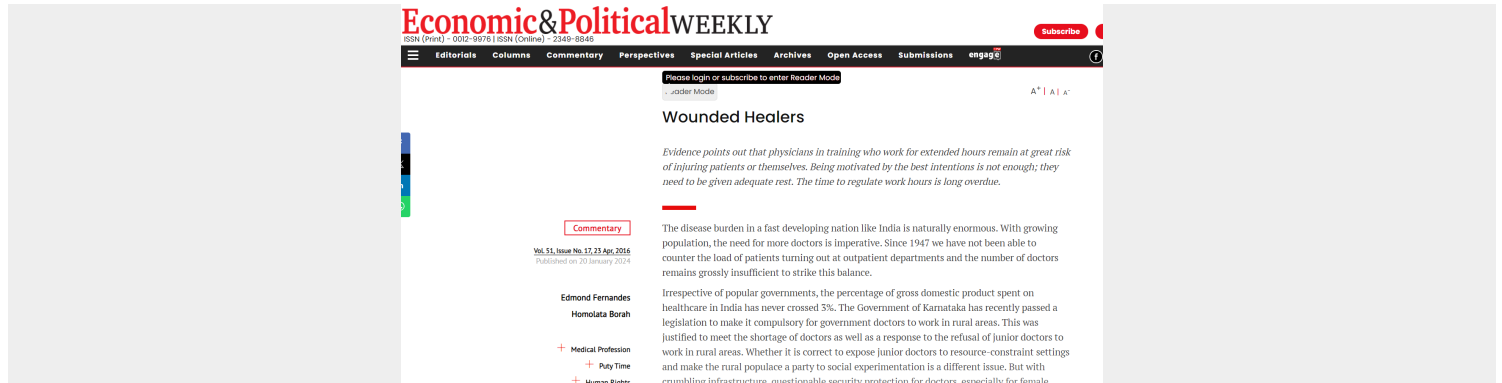




37,000 MEDICOS IN INDIA SUFFERING FROM MENTAL ISSUES. ICEBREAK PHENOMENON?

Posted on May 14, 2024 by ECIPH



Category: [Opinions](#)

37,000 medicos in India suffer from mental issues and the burden only keeps increasing. Our Director, [Dr. Edmond Fernandes](#) had pointed this out through his work published in the EPW titled “[Wounded Healers](#)” which the government could have used to avert this crisis long back.

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Wounded Healers

Evidence points out that physicians in training who work for extended hours are more likely to be injured or injure patients. Being motivated by the best intentions, they need to be given adequate rest. The time to regulate work hours is long overdue.

Commentary

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Edmond Fernandes

Homolata Borah

+ Medical Profession

+ Duty Time

+ Human Rights

The disease burden in a fast developing nation like India is naturally enormous. With a growing population, the need for more doctors is imperative. Since 1947 we have tried to counter the load of patients turning out at outpatient departments and tertiary care centers, but the medical workforce remains grossly insufficient to strike this balance.

Irrespective of popular governments, the percentage of gross domestic product spent on healthcare in India has never crossed 3%. The Government of Karnataka has enacted legislation to make it compulsory for government doctors to work in rural areas, which is justified to meet the shortage of doctors as well as a response to the refusal of private doctors to work in rural areas. Whether it is correct to expose junior doctors to resource constraints and make the rural populace a party to social experimentation is a different question. The crumbling infrastructure, questionable security protection for doctors, etc.

Taking cognisance of this, the apex medical education authority has prescribed several measures including regulating the duty hours of the students and initiating a suicide watch. These recommendations by the National Medical Commission (NMC) will be submitted before the Union Health Ministry for further implementation across the medical colleges in the country.

According to NMC data, 153 MBBS and 1120 doctors pursuing PG medical courses dropped out of their institutes in the last five years. Apart from the dropouts, at least 122 medical students, 64 in MBBS and 58 in post-graduate courses died by suicide between 2018 - 2023.

The rate of doctor suicide, unregulated work hours builds a crisis like never before.