



On August the 15th 1947 India became a free nation. This marked the end of an old era and freedom from the arduous British rule. BAPIO joins in celebrating the Independence Day with the citizens and well wishers of the nation to commemorate the sacrifice of martyrs and pays homage to the brave freedom fighters who gave Indians a reason to smile.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Much has happened since the last Harmony issue.

Despite of the robust defence put in by the Department of Health and Home Office the High Court has accepted our petition to grant us the judicial review in relation to the PFT visas. Furthermore, the court has also stipulated that case should be heard as early as possible. This is indeed a good news.

I am also pleased to report a further political development. Lord Warner invited us to hear our concerns. The meeting took place on 5th of July 06. We have welcomed this opportunity as it has opened a channel for dialogue. Subsequently, another meeting was held with Ms Debbie Mellor, Head of NHS Workforce Management on the 13th of July to explore the issues in more detail.

The survey conducted by Dr Satyanarayan Hegde and Dr Jyothis George proved to be very useful during the negotiations. It showed that 5 out of 6 IMGs (916 out of 1100) would be affected adversely by the ruling as they were not yet in a rotation that would lead to certificate of completion of training. Extrapolating from this it is clear that over 13000 out of estimated 16,000 IMGs presently in Training posts will be adversely affected by the new visa regulation

We are hopeful that a combination of legal pressure and political dialogue will result in justice for IMG doctors already in the country.

We are thankful to all those who have generously contributed towards the legal fund.

Ramesh Mehta

Beginning of a Political Dialogue



BAPIO delegation meeting Lord Warner
Department of Health – 5th July 2006

[L] Dr Ramganesha Lakshman, Dr Satwinder Basra, Dr Ramesh Mehta, Lord Warner, Dr Satheesh Mathew and Dr Gopal Sheshappanavar

LEGAL CHALLENGE TEAM

Dr Ramesh Mehta Dr Raman Lakshman
Dr Satheesh Mathew Dr Arun George
Dr Ekta Sahu Buddhdev Pandya
Dr Satwinder Basra

Core action group

Dr Peeyush Kumar Dr Parag Sayal
Dr Vinay Shanthi Dr Satheesh Prabhu
Dr Santosh Krishnan

BAPIO

Annual General Meeting and Elections
Saturday 30th September 2006

VENUE TBA – Bedford

Contact: info@bapio.com

Why more Ethnic Minority Doctors tend to get more in trouble ? **Dr Umesh Prabhu**

Recently the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Sir Liam Donaldson has released his long awaited report on the medical regulation, Good doctors, safer patients. CMO's recommendation will have a significant impact on the future of the medical profession in this country.

Some of the CMO's recommendations are to be welcomed. I am however worried about his recommendation that the burden of proof in fitness-to-practice cases should be reduced from the criminal to the civil. There is a possibility that more doctors may be disciplined and it is likely that Ethnic Minority Doctors (EMDs) will be disadvantaged. Many may end up losing their professional reputation, self-respect, jobs and their livelihood.

At local Trust level, EMD's mistakes, errors and misconduct is investigated more thoroughly and more often dealt formally. They are disciplined harshly. They are also more likely to be referred to the GMC. This is what probably constitutes institutional racism. Many of these

issues could have been dealt informally having discussed with the concern doctor. Help and support for the doctor could have been provided. In some cases local formal disciplinary action is all that could be required.

In addition to institutional racism there are system failures e.g. a single handed inner city GP with lack of resource and support, failure to progress in one's chosen speciality, getting stuck as staff grade or associate specialist, lack of support to junior doctors, lack of representation of ethnic minority doctors in medical leadership. .

The third important reason has to do with ethnic minority doctors themselves. Some of them tend to work in isolation, some have a fatalistic attitude and others have problems due to cultural differences. Proportionately more ethnic minority doctors are likely to have communication problems and lack of awareness of acceptable professional behaviour. There may be lack of appreciation about GMC's "duty of a doctor" and failure to respond appropriately when there are concerns about a performance/conduct issues. Many are not a member of defence union or professional associations like BMA or BAPIO and are reluctant to seek help and advice.

Lastly there is a failure of some professional associations to take up issues affecting the EMDs.

Umesh Prabhu is a NCAS adviser and National Vice Chairman of BAPIO (Views expressed in this article does not reflect the views or policy of NCAS or any other organisation).

Dr Prabhu has for nearly 10 years taken keen interest in this issue and has done lot of work on patient safety, medical errors and the performance management of the doctors. He is convinced that there are complex reasons as to why disproportionately more ethnic minority doctors are being disciplined.

Why?

- 72% doctors charged with manslaughter,
- 60% doctors appearing before the GMC ,
- 36%(denominator 14%) long term suspended Consultants

Are all from Ethnic Minority?

BAPIO and EMDs in DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

BAPIO has been working hard to understand the reasons as to why more EMDs are being disciplined and get in to trouble.

BAPIO is determined to address these issues and has been actively involved in training and education of it's members. In September, BAPIO will be meeting the GMC team to look at this issue.

We are very thankful to Prof Graeme Catto, the President of the GMC for his keen interest in these issues. BAPIO is also planning to work with Institutions like NCAS and BMA to understand the reasons as to why disproportionately more ethnic minority doctors are being disciplined.

BAPIO strongly believes that every patient should get the best possible care and it is their safety and their wellbeing that should be at the heart of our role as doctors but it is also important that doctors are dealt fairly and equally irrespective of their race, gender, age or ethnic origin.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST OVERSEAS DOCTORS: HIGHLY DISPROPORTIONATE

Last year, the GMC received 4,980 complaints, compared to 4,452 in 2004, and 3,926 in 2003.

A breakdown of the figures revealed a "highly disproportionate" number of complaints were being made against medics trained overseas.

It also found a doctor is 64% more likely to be complained against if qualified 20 years ago or longer.

The Fitness to Practise statistics are published annually by the GMC. The latest figures analyse the year up to 31 December 2005.

Source: BBC website

WELL DONE ASHTIN !

Ashtin **Doorgakant** has slogged 180 miles on a bike to raise funds for our Legal Action.

He rode from coast to coast across mainland England. He is a trainee doctor at Carlisle and Graduate from Mauritius. He has raised over 400 pounds.





FUNDS FOR LEGAL ACTION CONTINUE TO FLOW

More than 500 doctors have contributed to the legal challenge and the total donations have now crossed £46,000. Doctors have contributed from £5 to £1000 each.

There have been collections from various Indian Alumni organisations as well as specialist organisations including the British Indian Psychiatrists Association (BIPA) and British Association of Indian Anaesthetists (BAOIA).

“The spontaneity of the collection is overwhelming” said Dr. Satheesh Mathew of London Division.

Dr Sajayan and Dr Nand kumar who are looking after the special web site for legal action www.bapioaction.moonfruit.com are impressed

with the interest in the site. “The number of hits is steadily increasing” they said

“With news that the case will be heard soon, we are likely to need more funds” commented Mr Buddhdev Pandya MBE the Honorary Advisor to BAPIO.

“All are requested to donate generously for this important fight for the self-respect of all the International Medical Graduates” said Dr. Umesh Prabhu BAPIO vice chairman.

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Dukhi's corner

Friends,

Over the past few days it has been a hot Indian summer. I was enjoying an early morning sun and as I was sipping masala tea, I had a call from our leader Dr Mehta to ask me why I was feeling so miserable? You see, *Dukhi Atma's* have this style - we have to find some excuse to be unhappy. Since I was dukhi, he said don't feel so bad, think positive.

‘Look we have now good news from the Court, so what is the problem?’ I suppose he is right. I think it is a bit of history in making.

A thought crossed my mind. Just before the last General Election, BAPIO conducted a survey amongst our Doctors. A sizable number were happy with the way the Government was managing the NHS. I wondered if we were to ask the same question now, what would be the response?

A colleague in the office passed on to me a new piece of news from the DoH. To my surprise, the Department is consulting on their proposals to replace the Patients Panel and creating some form of new local network called LINKs. Yet another attempt to shift the ‘goal post’!

The job losses in the NHS Trusts must a worrying factor for almost all the medical personnel. My local paper had a front page head line; “NHS has lost the battle for its survival” And then I heard from Satheesh that no one turned up for the meeting he had organised to discuss HSNP issues.

I am sure he must have felt like a worm, trampled all over. All the more reason for me to be Dukhi

Satya moves to Clinton Town

BAPIO Grand Advisory Council thanked Satya for his contribution to BAPIO as he moves from the UK to USA.

He joins as a Clinical Fellow in Paediatric Pulmonology with Arkansas Children's Hospital, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. He has promised to continue his support for BAPIO. *Good Luck Satya.*



Congratulations to Dr Mathew

Dr Satheesh Mathew has been appointed as Medical Director for Newham Primary care Trust.

At this difficult time for NHS he has agreed to wear a *crown of thorns*, which shows his resolve to face difficult issues head on.

Well done Satheesh.

Feedback and suggestions to: Dr Sajayan (sajayan@gmail.com)

BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIANS OF INDIAN ORIGIN

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