

Metro Now

DEPRESSED DOCS

MOST DOCS HAVE DEGREES, BUT NOWHERE TO GO FOR PG COURSE

ORCHIE BANDYOPADHYAY

Be-coming an MBBS is no cakewalk. But for an MBBS student, what lies ahead could be a nightmare. For 30,000 MBBS students who pass out every year across the country, there are 8,000 seats in both private and government medical colleges for postgraduation. Of these students, all of whom go through a rigorous five-year regimen of studies, most are left with just a degree, but having nowhere to go. As a result, around January-February, a large percentage of students are depressed.

Take the case of Arun (name

30,000 MBBS students pass out every year but there are only 8,000 seats in both private and govt medical colleges for postgraduation.

changed), who after spending five-and-a-half-years, went into depression. His parents said he had lost confidence and interest in studies.

After much persuasion by friends and family, he was able to come out of it. "While in college we regularly discussed the situation after MBBS and I think that had a damaging effect on my mind," Arun said.

Dr Anil Bansal of Delhi Medical Council quotes the figure to be at least 10 per cent of MBBS students, with about one to two per cent taking the extreme step of committing suicide.

According to Dr Samir Parikh, psychiatrist, Max Hospital, said, "Let's not compare medical education with any other form of education. One has to admit that it is very tough. The only solution for medical students is that they should be prepared for all the chal-

lenges that they may face during the course of their career."

Also, private colleges charge anywhere from Rs 25 lakh to a crore for post graduate medical courses. So many students are left with no option but to go to the United States for further studies. It is a trend that has made the Government worried: Union Health Minister Abumani Ramadoss at a recent convocation at Aiiims cautioned against the brain drain and urged bright students to stay in India. But for MBBS grads from Aiiims like Dr Navkaran Singh Bajaj what Ramadoss said it hardly mattered. "I am looking forward to going to the United States to pursue

postgraduation. And what about doing the same in India? I believe in myself and that is what matters to me the most."

Dr Abhishek from Maulan Azad Medical College was not even keen on taking the PG entrance exams held here. He wanted to leave for the United States. His father said, "We literally had to coax him to take the entrance exams here." Abhishek's friend Armaan who is also a University College Medical Sciences' topper has his bags packed for America and he is not even attempting any of the entrance examinations here.

Also for the students, it is a no-win situation. The examination, too, is tough with no question paper being allowed to be taken out of the hall. Thus, for students taking the exam, there is no help in the form of 10-year question papers and the like, while preparing for the exams. That is why the US seems to be a very attractive option for many. For many it is the only means to securing a future as a doctor.