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**THE GOVERNMENT MEDICAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION**

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His Excellency Gotabhaya Rajapaksa,  
President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka,  
Presidential Secretariat,  
Colombo 01.

Your Excellency,

### **Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC) Crisis**

Attention has been drawn to SLMC as the medical profession's supreme governing body on its 'independence.' It is vital to explore the facts in this context.

SLMC, established by the Medical Ordinance in 1924, is the one and only statutory institute to govern the standards of both medical practice and medical education. Hence, the poor state of affairs at SLMC would compromise public interest.

The composition of SLMC is as following; the President and 04 members appointed by the Minister of Health, Director General of Health Services, 09 members elected from Medical Faculties (usually Deans), one member from Dental Faculty, 08 elected Medical Practitioners, One Dental Surgeon and one AMP.

Over ninety years of the existence of SLMC, Dr Rajitha Senaratne was the first Minister of Health who made attempts to destroy the SLMC by mobilising several teams with assigned tasks. Though the term of office at SLMC is five years, during 2015-2020, four Presidents were appointed to SLMC, and Registrar/SLMC post was kept vacant. Attorney General was not allowed to defend SLMC in courts.

As the successive Minister, Hon Pavitra Wanniarachchi was compelled to take several steps to **restore independence as well as the functioning of SLMC.**

When she became the Minister, SLMC kept registering foreign medical graduates without Advance Levels (A/L), some with all three subjects failed (All 3F) and kept postponing SLMC elections and ERPM exams for years. She was flooded with complaints on irregularities in the "recognition" of foreign degrees. Activities were done to embarrass the government with regard to its foreign relations. SLMC was used to take revenge from doctors and to exonerate their own. Financial and other forms of irregularities are yet to be taken up.

Hon Pavitra Wanniarachchi **legalised Minimum standards of Medical Education** through parliament, which was long overdue. Until then, Rajitha's team sustained its resistance over a decade in a shameless manner to facilitate registration as a doctor with no Advance Levels.

In response to legitimate complaints, Hon Pavithra Wanniarachchi acted according to Medical and Interpretation Ordinances in consultation with Attorney General and several Presidents Counsels. **She implemented the five-member committee's legitimate recommendations, which** inquired into complaints issuing a 108-page report with supporting evidence. The committee accommodated all personalities with allegations and SLMC council members to explain themselves. To maintain transparency, the full report was released to the official website of the Ministry of Health.

Responsible individuals are identified by the report and do not fall under 'Collective Responsibility.' As such, all acts by the current Minister are legitimate and done for the public's best interests.

On the other hand, she did not appoint political figures. Dean of the prestigious Colombo Medical Faculty was appointed as the President/SLMC. How else should a minister act? Should she keep silent and ignore public interest matters, especially when health is the main global priority.

Most statements against her actions are issued by the very personalities and organisations responsible for the above misdeeds, colluding with Dr Rajitha Senaratna. Ironically they remained silent about the irregularities in Dr. Rajitha Senarathne's era.

1. Association of Medical Specialists (AMS) is an organisation which was revived by Dr Rajitha Senarathne during his tenure as Minister of Health
2. Dr. Lalantha Ranasinghe, President of the AMS, contested and lost at the last SLMC elections and subsequently colluded with Dr. Rajitha Senarathne to postpone the next SLMC election.
3. Prof. Indika Karunathilake, President of SLMA, also contested and lost at the last SLMC elections.
4. Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians made representations on behalf of Prof Harendra De Silva, whose services as President SLMC was terminated, is a past president and member of its council.

The current Minister is acting in her capacity to restore the independence and functions of the SLMC, based on the committee recommendations. This will take the SLMC back to Pre-Rajitha Senaratna status.

Ironically, **'SLMC dependency on Rajitha Senaratne' is interpreted as 'SLMC independence' by Pro-Rajitha personalities.**

Hence, we request Your Excellency and your government to support the Minister of Health's decision to safeguard the independence of SLMC and thereby the standards of medical practice and medical education in the best interests of our citizens.

Thank you,  
Yours faithfully,



Dr. Anuruddha Padaniya  
President

  
Dr. Senal Fernando  
Secretary

Cc: Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka  
Hon. Pavithra Wanniarachchi, Minister of Health  
Hon. Cabinet Ministers of Sri Lanka  
Secretary to HE the President  
Secretary to Hon. Prime Minister  
Secretary, Minister of Education  
Secretary, Ministry of Health  
Director General of Health Services  
President, SLMC  
To all Council Members of SLMC  
Registrar, SLMC  
To All Secretaries of GMOA Branch Unions