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10th December 2020

His Excellency Gotabhaya Rajapaksha
The President of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
President's Office
Colombo 01

Your Excellency,

Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC) crisis - Reply to President GMOA

We wish to draw your Excellency's kind attention to the letter dated 9th December 2020, addressed to you by GMOA, signed by its President Dr. Anurudda Padeniya, on the current SLMC crisis.

We wish to categorically state that this letter is full of **LIES and DECEPTIONS** and we believe any attempt to deliberately mislead your Excellency as the head of state can be a very serious offence. These inaccuracies include 'half truths' which amount to lying.

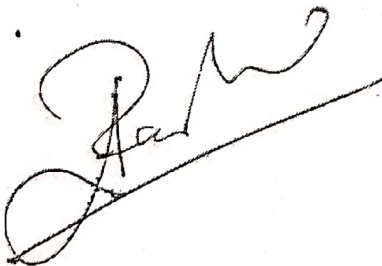
1. In his description of the composition of the SLMC, he has deliberately hidden the fact that legally, the present SLMC should also have Specialists (03 medical and 01 dental), in addition to the composition he has described, according to the Specialists Registry related act passed in Parliament in 2018. The recommendations stated in the report of the 5 member committee, and the timing of the sacking of 5 members of the SLMC is a clear attempt to suppress those posts to enable dominance of the GMOA within SLMC.
2. All decisions of the SLMC are **collective decisions** which are binding in nature and no **INDIVIDUAL** member is responsible for any of these collective decisions. This was clearly stated in the submissions given to the five member subcommittee by SLMC, and one signatory of this submission included Prof. Vajira Dissanayake, the newly appointed President to SLMC.
3. Current crisis in the SLMC is orchestrated by the GMOA with the help of the present health minister by illegally removing its president and 4 council members well before they finish their term. 3 out of the 5 member committee appointed to inquire into the allegations against the SLMC made by the GMOA were also active members of the GMOA, which heavily undermined its credibility. Further, this so called committee of inquiry was a fact finding committee and no specific charges were made against those dismissed and they were not given a chance to defend themselves.
4. From 2015-2020, only two presidents were appointed to the SLMC. When the previous government came to power in 2015, Prof. Carlo Fonseka was the President of SLMC, appointed by the earlier Government, but he was not only allowed to complete his full term of 5 years, he was even given a 6 months extension. When he left, mostly for health reasons, Professor Colvin Gooneratne was appointed as the chairman. He resigned after being there for about 18 months by writing an 8 page letter criticizing the manner in which GMOA was manipulating and dominating the SLMC. When he was leaving, he even had a press conference and highlighted about GMOA's interferences in the SLMC. Prof. Harendra de Silva was only the 3rd President appointed for the post.

5. Since there was no legally valid "Minimum standards of medical education" available in our country despite repeated requests to successive governments by the Sri Lanka Medical Council and other medical professionals, SLMC had no choice other than registering those with suboptimal A/L results due to several court decisions. This was no fault of the sacked members. Registration of overseas graduates without adequate A/L qualifications have occurred for decades and several of such doctors have even served the executive committee and general committee of the GMOA with Dr Padeniya. None of those who are protesting against the sacking of SLMC members had a hand in delaying minimum standards or supporting the registration of those without A-Levels. What Dr Padeniya has mentioned about this is a blatant lie.
6. Association of Medical Specialists is an organization consisting of the majority of medical and dental specialists in Sri Lanka. This was formed way back in 2004, long before Hon. Dr Rajitha Senaratna became the minister of health in 2015. At present, AMS has over 1000 members which is close to 70% of the total number of specialists working in the state health sector. What Dr Padeniya has said about AMS as an organization revived by the previous minister is another misleading blatant lie.
7. From 2014 May to 2017, GMOA of Dr Padeniya suppressed SLMC elections through the then Minister of Health, Hon. Maithreepala Sirisena and a letter to the effect is available. It's because during those early days GMOA nominees lost SLMC elections repeatedly. Later by bringing voters through bus loads in an unacceptable way, and collecting postal ballots through branch unions they developed a way to win elections through malpractices. However, GMOA is still trying to suppress elections of the Medical Specialists to the SLMC, as they do not want to lose their dominance in the SLMC.
8. Highly respected medical professionals and leading medical associations which represent a wide range of the medical fraternity issued statements against this arbitrary removal of SLMC members by the Hon. Health Minister and they are extremely concerned about maintaining independence and integrity of this supreme governing body of the medical profession.

Finally, we wish to request from your Excellency to take measures to stop this injustice immediately and grant us an opportunity to explain further details of these lies and deceptions at your earliest convenience.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,



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- Cc: 01. Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka
02. Hon. Pavithra Wanniarachchi, Minister of Health
03. Hon. Cabinet Ministers of Sri Lanka

04. Secretary to HE the President
05. Secretary to Hon. Prime Minister
06. Secretary, Ministry of Health
07. Secretary, Ministry of Education
08. DGHS
09. President, SLMC
10. Council Members, SLMC
11. Registrar, SLMC
12. Media