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Nation

SC notice to Centre, MCI on striking doctors

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New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday sought a response from the Centre and the Medical Council of India on a PIL seeking to initiate disciplinary proceedings against doctors who refuse to give emergency treatment to patients during their strikes and demonstrations.

Agreeing to hear the plea that emergency services should not be disrupted in the hospital during demonstrations by doctors, a bench headed by Chief Justice S H Kapadia issued notices to the government, the Council and AIIMS which have witnessed many strikes in recent years. The court passed the order on a petition filed by an NGO, 'People For Better Treatment', pleading that the court should interfere in the matter as many lives were lost and patients due to abrupt strikes by medical practitioners in government hospitals in recent months.

Pleading that such practices are professional misconduct and violative of the Code of Ethics Regulation of doctors, the NGO submitted medical practitioners involved must be punished.

"Any doctor involved with the disruption of emergency medical services should be held guilty for professional misconduct and for violation of MCI rules and regulations," the petition said.

"Threats to shut down hospitals, including the emergency department, are not limited only to hospitals in Delhi. Doctors group across India have been frequently using the same tactics in recent times to establish their claims with great peril for helpless patients," the petition said.

The court, after hearing the NGO's plea contention, agreed to hear the case and asked all the

parties to file their replies by the next date of hearing.