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Dated: 13th April 2015

Dear Members,

The Government of India has expressed serious concerns over the dwindling sex ratio in our country and the Prime Minister has launched his "BetiBachaoBetiPadhao" movement. Our Association has always supported the government in this endeavour. However we are equally concerned that the PcPNDT act has become a draconian act and a number of instances of harassment of our members on this issue has been brought to our notice. Minor deficiencies in the paper work has invoked severe action including sealing of the machine and recently some doctors in Pune have been convicted for these technical violations.

We at AFG strongly oppose the harassment of doctors for minor deficiencies in paper work (Like no comma, full stop or not wearing Apron or name plate). We believe urgent changes in the Rules of the PcPNDT act are required to allow for a graded system of penalties, first warning the doctor if and when grave deficiencies are noticed (Like not filling up of forms or not sending them to the authorities), monetary penalties and finally temporary cancellation of PCPNDT registration if repeatedly the doctor is found to be deliberately committing these offences. If however a doctor is found guilty of actual sex determination the government is free to take strong action against the doctor and such action will be definitely endorsed by the Association. We also want the government to implement the provisions of the PcPNDT act which actually provides for strong legal action against the relatives of a patient who actually gets a sex determination done or demands it.

A list of demands has been handed over to the government by Indian Radiology & Imaging Association and the Health Minister has invited all interested associations for talks to discuss these issues. The date of the meeting is to be informed to us after the 12th of April 2015. We hope to take a large delegation to sit with the minister and the Appropriate Authorities under the PcPNDT act to sort our grievances and ensure that harassment of doctors ends immediately. We are aware that a group of doctors across the country have called for a strike on the 15th of April 2015 to draw the attention of the government to the atrocities against doctors under the act. We however feel that a strike at this moment when we are poised for talks with the government may prove counter-productive. We therefore while fully endorsing the demands of these groups can only ask our members to show their solidarity with the movement initiated by these groups by wearing black batches on the 15th of April 2015. We will review our stand after the talks with the government and incase the talks fail we will consider intensifying our agitation if necessary with an indefinite strike till our demands are met.

AFG President and members of managing committee.

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