

100 docs under scanner for drug trials on poor

GLARE ON MNCs Economic Offences Wing probing complaint by NGO

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BHOPAL: Nearly 100 doctors in MP are suspected to have been paid by multinational companies to test the strength of their (MNCs) drugs on poor patients.

The state Economic Offences Wing (EOW) is investigating the case and the issue has rocked the assembly.

An NGO by the name Swasth Samarthan Sewa Samiti has lodged a complaint with the government against six doctors of Indore. It has asked for a state-wide inquiry into the matter.

Merck (US), Fhossmann-la roche ltd (Switzerland) and Balichil Sankyo Pharma Development (US) are some of the firms allegedly involved in this.

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It seems to be a serious and sensitive issue. We are inquiring into it.

AJAY SHARMA, EOW

EOW Inspector General Ajay Sharma said a preliminary inquiry was being conducted. "It seems to be a serious and sensitive issue," Sharma said.

Copies of the NGO's complaint letter have been forwarded to President Pratibha Patil, MP Governor Bahram Jakhar, MP High Court Chief Justice S.R. Alam, the Lokayukta, and the Madhya Pradesh Human Rights Commission.

Anand Singh Raje, who runs the NGO, said: "Our concern is

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DR SUMIT MISHRA

for poor patients, who are fraudulently subjected to unethical drug trials. I lodged this complaint as I do not want the entire medical fraternity to get a bad name just because of a few."

Sources said a lobby representing the allegedly erring doctors serving in government-run medical colleges had met some MLAs who raised the issue in the House to present the physicians' side of the matter.

However, three MLAs — Pratap Girewal (Congress), Pradu-

mn Singh Tomar (Congress) and Paras Saklecha (Independent) — were not convinced, and following their intervention, the EOW wing of the police initiated investigation.

The Maharaja Yeshwantrao (MY) Hospital, attached to MGM Medical College at Indore, is said to be the biggest den of such trials. There are similar reports from four other medical colleges in the state.

Officials at Indore Medical College say the trials were conducted in accordance with government guidelines. "There is nothing wrong in drug trials but the state should have proper guidelines ... there is a confusion on this issue," said Dr Sumit Mishra, member of the Indore Medical Teachers Association.

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