

AIIMS, Safdarjung give Mamata 48-hr ultimatum: Meet doctors' demands or else...

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Resident doctors of AIIMS and Safdarjung Hospital, who boycotted work on Friday in protest against attacks on their colleagues in Kolkata, have now given a 48-hour ultimatum to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to meet the demands of the state's agitating doctors, failing which they said they would go on indefinite strike.

Members of the AIIMS Resident Doctors Association (RDA), who resumed work on Saturday, said that if the demands of the West Bengal doctors are not met within 48 hours, they would be forced to resort to an indefinite strike. "We condemn the hostile and unapologetic attitude of the government of West Bengal. Our protest at AIIMS, New Delhi continues until justice is meted out."

"According to the decision taken in a general body meeting held on June 14, RDA issues an ultimatum of 48 hours to the West Bengal government to meet the demands of the striking doctors there, failing which we would be forced to resort to an indefinite strike at AIIMS, New Delhi. We hope that our colleagues across the nation will join us in this hour of



need," the AIIMS RDA said in a statement. They expressed their gratitude to Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan for his prompt and proactive steps to resolve the impasse. "We sincerely hope that he will address this matter of utmost importance with the urgency that it merits," they said.

Safdarjung Hospital RDA president Parakash Thakur also echoed a similar stand on the matter. The doctors, however, will continue to wear helmets and bandages at work as a sign of protest.

The 48-hour ultimatum by AIIMS doctors comes days after Mamata Banerjee gave a four-hour ultimatum to the striking

doctors in her state to withdraw their strike or vacate hostels. To express solidarity with the doctors who are agitating against an attack on their colleagues in West Bengal, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) has called for a strike on June 17.

The IMA has also decided to continue their protest on Saturday and Sunday condemning the continued suffering of the resident doctors and repeated occurrence of harassments, it said. These protests will include wearing black badges, dharnas, peace marches. IMA has also requested the support from all associations of the fraternity to join the agitation. The apex body of doctors in the country also renewed its

demand for a central law to check violence against healthcare workers in hospitals and said that the law should provide a minimum sentence of seven-year jail to violators. Vardhan on Friday supported the medical fraternity's demand for a central law to check violence against healthcare workers in hospitals and said such crimes should be made non-bailable. Scores of doctors in Delhi Friday held demonstrations, with many seeing patients in emergency wards wearing bandages on forehead or helmets, marching and raising slogans to express solidarity.

Modi is the PM, I'm the CM, we need to work together: Jagan Mohan Reddy

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On his first visit to the Capital after taking over as Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Jaganmohan Reddy spoke to HT about his plans for the state, his relationship with the Centre, and the upcoming Parliament session. Edited excerpts:

What was going through your mind when you became CM after a dramatic political journey?

Nine-year-long journey, yes. The first thing I thought was, 'had my father been alive...' Now we have a responsibility and God willing, him along with God, we will do better than him. Do you feel weighed down by that - being your father's son? One thing lucky for me is that I had Chandrababu Naidu in between. He was the worst chief minister the state could get. That being the case, anything I will do will be far better than Chandrababu Naidu. But yes, competing with my dad is what I would like to do.

One particular decision you have taken - appointing five deputy chief ministers - is a record of sorts. What was the thinking behind that?

We've given one to Scheduled Castes, one to Scheduled Tribes, one for OBC, one for minorities, and one more for Kapus. All the sections were with us in this huge mandate. They've given us this mandate, and this was a move to instil confidence, to say, 'I am with you'. To send a message that they mean a lot. Some would say you are indulging in tokenism. Basically it is not just having deputy chief ministers, we have done something. Even the Cabinet berths, almost 60% are SC/ST/OBC and minorities. This was never done before. So we are sending a strong message on social justice that this government means that we are together with the downtrodden.

That we're connected with them. Ultimately, it is with all their blessings that we are what we are. We should never forget that.

For 14 months, I was on the road day in and day out. I was sleeping there, moving from one place to another. Before that, I was connected, but in that time, I travelled more than any politician in Andhra Pradesh. That padyatra made the difference, you know where you are and people know where you are. When I was walking, people came to explain their plight. Everything they said, they said with hope. They gave you a chance to change their life. That's the most important thing. 'Credibility' is a word one must never forget, and it's what has got me this far.

One important aspect of being a CM is Centre-state relations. You've just met home minister Amit Shah, what kind of relationship do you see with him and Prime Minister Narendra Modi? There is speculation that you have an understanding with them.

What is there to have an understanding? We fought the elections on our own, they fought the elections on their own; we got the seats that are ours, they got theirs. Everything is so transparent. As far as me going to Tirupati, he's the Prime Minister of the country and he's coming to my state; as chief minister, it's very important that I receive the PM, especially when he is coming to my state for a 'darshan'. So I met and gave him due respect.

The elections are over, he's the PM and I'm the CM, and we need to work together. I need him to run the state finances. So it's very important that the relations between the state and Centre are cordial. Even though I keep pressing I told him also, 'every time I meet, I will never let you forget the special category status, and I pray to God that your heart is

softened'. There's nothing else I can do. If he'd gotten 250 [Lok Sabha seats], then probably it would have been a different ball game.

In Parliament, will you be supporting them? It is always going to be issue-based support. If there is something that's going to do good for the country, why would we not support? If you think it won't, then why would you support. It is our choice.

What about the report that the deputy leader of Lok Sabha may be from your party? To be fair, neither have we asked, nor have they proposed. This is all speculation. You said as CM, you need to work with the Centre. But Mamata Banerjee is not coming

for the Niti Aayog meeting. What do you think of the stand she has taken?

We've just been elected. Our situation, our finances need the central government. So it is very important that relations between the state and the central government grow and become healthier. At the same time, it is our duty that the central government doesn't forget our special category status. For Didi, it is a different story. She's got elections around the corner. She has now got the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] in a position where they are fighting for that space. For us, national parties have no space in our state. So we don't see anybody as a threat.

PM Modi's personal touch in letters to village pradhans

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Concerned about the water crisis in rural areas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has written a personal letter to 'Gram Pradhans' (village chiefs) requesting them to conserve rainwater during the forthcoming monsoon.

The letters, signed by the PM, have been hand-delivered to the pradhans through respective District Magistrates and Collectors in the districts.

In several rural belts, the PM's letter has become a talking point among villagers. For instance, in Eastern UP's Sonbhadra, located near PM's constituency in Varanasi, the PM's letter has been delivered to 637 village chiefs wherein he has requested the Pradhans (Sarpanch) that they should make personal efforts to encourage villagers to initiate the process of conserving rainwater this season. Written in Hindi with a personal touch, the PM says in his letter, "Dear Sarpanchji, Namaskar. I hope that you and all my brothers and sisters of the panchayat would be in the best of health. The rainy season is about to begin. We are grateful to God that we have been blessed by enough rainwater. We should make all efforts and arrangement to conserve this blessing (water)." The PM has made a special request to the Pradhans in his one-page letter that they should convene a meeting of the gram sabha (village assembly) wherein his message should be read out. "It is requested that a discussion should be held in the village on how to conserve water. I have faith in all of you that adequate arrangements would be made to save every drop of rainwater," the letter adds.

Sport News

Manchester weather update, India vs Pakistan: Rain could impact World Cup's biggest rivalry

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Two days before the much-anticipated India vs Pakistan fixture, the ICC had reasons to be worried. Manchester received heavy showers, the pitch was under the hover cover, while the rest of the square was covered by sheets. Not entirely promising, this World Cup has already seen four washouts, and the ICC would desperately hope they get a game on Sunday. Few hours later, sun peaked and then things started looking much brighter. The groundstaff swung into action, ensuring no water slips through and alters the pitch. It has rained every day this week in Manchester and yet, the pitch

looked bare and dry, which is great work done by the curator and the support staff.

The forecast is quite positive on Sunday, there are light showers expected towards late afternoon. As per the weather forecasting website, Accuweather, a light shower is predicted between 12 PM local time and 1 PM local time in Manchester on Sunday. The match begins at 10:30 AM local time, hence, we might see an on-time start.

Also, as per Accuweather, conditions will be overcast right through the day and there will be brief spells of shower as the day progresses. The ICC has been under fire for not having reserve days for the marquee event. However, Chief Executive David Richardson made it clear that

having something like that in the group stages would have been a logistical nightmare.

"This is extremely unseasonal weather. In the last couple of days, we have experienced more than twice the average monthly rainfall for June which is usually the third driest month in the UK. In 2018, there was just 2 mm of rain in June but the last 24 hours alone has seen around 100 mm rainfall in the south-east of England.

"When a match is affected by weather conditions, the venue team works closely with match officials and ground staff to ensure that we have the best possible opportunity to play cricket, even if it is a reduced overs game," Richardson had said on Tuesday.

FIH Men's Series Hockey Finals: India to take on South Africa in summit clash

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India will clash with South Africa in the title clash of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) Men's Series Finals at Bhubaneswar, Odisha this evening. The match will start at 7:15 PM at the Kalinga Stadium.

Winning their respective semi-finals, India and South Africa had set up the summit clash yesterday and sealed their berths in the Olympic Qualifiers. Top two teams of this tournament were to join 12 others for the 14-team Olympic Qualifiers to be held in October-November this year. Meanwhile, the FIH Women's Series Finals began at Hiroshima in Japan this morning.

The Indian eves placed in Group-A will play their opening game against Uruguay at 2:30 this afternoon (Indian Time). Like the Men's Finals, teams that finish at the

top two in the tournament will make it to the Olympics qualifier to be held later this year.

ICC World Cup: Australia to take on Sri Lanka, South Africa to face Afghanistan. In the ICC Cricket World Cup, defending champions Australia will take on Sri Lanka, while South Africa face Afghanistan today. The Australia-Sri Lanka game will be played in London at 3 PM (Indian Standard Time), with the South Africa-Afghanistan match scheduled to be begin at 6 PM at Cardiff.

All India Radio will broadcast live commentary on the match between Australia and Sri Lanka. It can be heard on DTH (Hindi) and additional frequencies from 2:30 pm onwards. The weather in London is forecast to be mostly sunny, while there is a prediction of rain in Cardiff. Due to showers, four matches in the tournament have, so far, ended without any result.

The most recent one was India's third round-robin game against New Zealand at Nottingham. India will play arch-rivals Pakistan tomorrow in their fourth match at Manchester. In the 10-team points table, New Zealand continues to be at the top with seven points, followed by hosts England at second with six points.

Australia also have six points but they are third due to net run rate. India are fourth with five points. Sri Lanka is fifth with four points, while West Indies, Bangladesh and Pakistan are sixth, seventh and eighth with three points each.

South Africa is ninth with one point, with Afghanistan rock bottom with no points in its kitty, so far. Top four teams at the end of the round-robin stage will make it to the semi-finals. The last-4 stage will be played on the 9th and 11th of next month. The final is slated for 14th July.

India vs Pakistan, ICC World Cup 2019: Babar Azam learns from watching Virat Kohli bat

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One of the most prolific batsman going around, young Pakistan batsman Babar Azam has risen up the ranks extremely quickly in a very short span of time. While there are comparisons made with Indian captain Virat Kohli, young Azam himself concedes that he is still learning and that he models himself on India captain Virat Kohli just days before the fierce rivals clash in an explosive World Cup showdown.

Babar holds the key for Pakistan against old foes India in Manchester on Sunday and the batsman has been fine-tuning his game by watching videos of the supremely talented Kohli.

Babar showed his class by scoring a brilliant 63 in Pakistan's 348-8 when they beat pre-tournament favourites England earlier in the World Cup. His heroics gave Pakistan their only win so far in the tournament, with defeats against the West Indies and Australia, while their match

against Sri Lanka was rained off.

While there is no love lost between India and Pakistan on or off the pitch, Babar is willing to admit he watches Kohli's batting and tries to learn from him.

"I watch his batting and the way he bats in various conditions and try to learn from them," Babar told reporters.

"I try to learn with experience. This is my process of learning, so I try my hundred per cent. 'His (Kohli) winning ratio is higher (for India) so I am trying to achieve that as well.'"

Babar, 24, says Pakistan's Champions Trophy final demolition of India two years ago has increased the team's confidence they can claim another surprise success against India this weekend.

"The Champions Trophy win gave us confidence and will also help here as well because the team is mostly the same and that win is always an inspiration," Babar said. Pakistan, trounced by 124 runs in the opening match of the Champions Trophy by India, hit back by crushing their bitter rivals in the final.

Their 180-run win at the Oval is the biggest over India in all ODIs.

"That win can never go off our memories and it's a good inspiration," he said.

The India-Pakistan clash will be watched by a vast global audience and Babar insists the pressure will spur his unpredictable team to produce their best.

"We are well prepared for this match because India and Pakistan matches are exciting and demanding and the whole world watches it," Babar said. "The whole team is positive so we are looking forward to the match. Not only me but all the players want to finish on a high, whoever hits form wants to win it."

And Babar is confident Pakistan will handle India's potent pace attack, led by number one ODI bowler Jasprit Bumrah.

"No doubt, India have a good bowling attack but we have played well against England who also have a very good pace attack so all of us are confident the Indian pace attack will be properly handled," Babar said.