

Concern's Over KPME Act

What is the issue?

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- Karnataka has made draft rules over Private Medical Establishments (Amendments) Act.

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- Several concerns have been felt over these draft rules.

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What is KPME Act?

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- The Karnataka Private Medical Establishments Act was passed in 2007 to "to bring a comprehensive legislation in place of the Karnataka Private Nursing Home (Regulation) Act, 1976.

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- This act will be the legal control over private medical establishments (PMEs) in the State.

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- Among other things, the Bill made the registration of PMEs mandatory and laid down guidelines to ensure their quality.

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- Initially amendments made to Karnataka Private Medical Establishments (Amendment) Bill 2017 intends to bring the PMEs under the purview of the government.

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- This paved a way for the Karnataka government fixing the rates for each class of treatment, and will provide grievance redressal systems.

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- It also aimed to put a stop to the practice of demanding advance payment in case of emergency treatment, and not releasing dead bodies to relatives till all dues have been settled.

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- After a series of protest made by private health sector entities a recent

amendment made has been made which allows inclusion of pro-corporate entities on various expert committees.

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What is the significance of recent amendment this act?

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- Looking at the larger interests of the community, most of our concerns have been addressed.

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- The rules show the importance of private health sector participation in providing affordable and quality healthcare services to people.

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What are the concerns over the act?

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- In the initial amendments said the government would notify fixed charges for various procedures, the rules did not indicate that the government had any control.

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- Many health activists claims that government is leaning towards private hospitals.

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- Inclusion of pro-corporate entities will skew both standards and costing in favour of large corporate hospitals.

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- It will also escalate costs that will only push citizens into pauperisation and destitution.

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Source: The Hindu

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