

Bill Summary

The National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Bill, 2019

- The National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Bill, 2019 was introduced in Rajya Sabha by the Minister of State for AYUSH, Mr. Shripad Yesso Naik, on January 7, 2019. The Bill seeks to repeal the Indian Medicine Central Council Act, 1970 and provide for a medical education system which ensures: (i) availability of adequate and high quality medical professionals of Indian System of Medicine, (ii) adoption of the latest medical research by medical professionals of Indian System of Medicine, (iii) periodic assessment of medical institutions, and (iv) an effective grievance redressal mechanism. Key features of the Bill include:
 - **Constitution of the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine:** The Bill provides for the establishment of the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM). The NCISM will consist of 29 members, appointed by the central government. A Search Committee will recommend names to the central government for the post of Chairperson, part time members, and presidents of the four autonomous boards set up under the NCISM. These posts will have a maximum term of four years. The Search Committee will consist of five members including the Cabinet Secretary and three experts nominated by the central government (of which two should have experience in any of the fields of Indian System of Medicine).
 - Members of the NCISM will include: (i) the Chairperson, (ii) the President of the Board of Ayurveda, (iii) the President of the Board of Unani, Siddha, and Sowa-Rigpa, (iv) the President of the Medical Assessment and Rating Board for Indian System of Medicine, (v) Advisor or Joint Secretary in-charge of Ayurveda, Ministry of AYUSH, and (vi) three members (part-time) to be elected by the registered medical practitioners of Ayurveda, and one member each by the respective registered medical practitioners of Siddha, Unani, and Sowa-Rigpa from amongst themselves from the prescribed regional constituencies under the Bill.
 - Further, within three years of the passage of the Bill, state governments will establish State Medical Councils for Indian System of Medicine at the state level.
 - **Functions of the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine:** Functions of the NCISM include: (i) framing policies for regulating medical institutions and medical professionals of Indian System of Medicine, (ii) assessing the requirements of healthcare related human resources and infrastructure, (iii) ensuring compliance by the State Medical Councils of Indian System of Medicine of the regulations made under the Bill, and (iv) ensuring coordination among the autonomous boards set up under the Bill.
 - **Autonomous boards:** The Bill sets up certain autonomous boards under the supervision of the NCISM. These boards are: (i) the Board of Ayurveda and the Board of Unani, Siddha, and Sowa-Rigpa: They will be responsible for formulating standards, curriculum, guidelines for setting up of medical institutions, and granting recognition to medical qualifications at the undergraduate and post graduate levels in their respective disciplines, (ii) the Medical Assessment and Rating Board for Indian System of Medicine: It determine the process of rating and assessment of medical institutions and have the power to levy monetary penalties on institutions which fail to maintain the minimum standards. It will also grant permission for establishing a new medical institution, and (iii) the Ethics and Medical Registration Board: It will maintain a National Register of all licensed medical practitioners of Indian System of Medicine, and regulate their professional conduct. Only those included in the Register will be allowed to practice Indian System of Medicine
 - **Advisory Council for Indian System of Medicine:** Under the Bill, the central government will constitute an Advisory Council for Indian System of Medicine. The Council will be the primary platform through which the states/union territories can put forth their views and concerns before the NCISM. Further, the Council will advise the NCISM on measures to determine and maintain the minimum standards of medical education.
 - **Entrance examinations:** There will be a uniform National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for admission to under-graduate education in each of the disciplines of the Indian System of Medicine in all medical institutions regulated by the Bill. The NCISM will specify the manner of conducting common counselling for admission in all such medical institutions. The Bill proposes a common final year National Exit Test for the students graduating from medical institutions to obtain the license for practice. Further, there will be a uniform post-graduate National Entrance Test which will be conducted separately for admission into post-graduate courses in each of the disciplines of the Indian System of Medicine in all medical institutions.
 - The Bill also proposes a National Teachers' Eligibility Test for postgraduates of each discipline of Indian System of Medicine who wish to take up teaching that particular discipline as a profession.

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