Under Rule 130 of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Rules, the following Bill which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Tamil Nadu on 21st February, 2024 is published together with Statement of Objects and Reasons for general information:—

L.A Bill No. 15 of 2024

A BILL TO REPLACE THE TAMIL NADU MEDICAL REGISTRATION ACT, 1914 AND TO CONSTITUTE THE TAMIL NADU STATE MEDICAL COUNCIL AND FOR MATTERS CONNECTED THEREWITH OR INCIDENTAL THERETO.

BE it enacted by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Tamil Nadu in the Seventy-fifth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

CHAPTER-I

PRELIMINARY

1. (1) This Act may be called the Tamil Nadu State Medical Council Act, 2024.

(2) It extends to the whole of the State of Tamil Nadu.

(3) It shall come into force on such date as the State Government may, by notification, appoint.

2. (1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, —

(a) “Chairperson” means the Chairperson of the Executive Committee;

(b) “Executive Committee” means the Executive Committee of the State Council;

(c) “Fund” means the Tamil Nadu State Medical Council Fund established under sub-section (1) of section 28;

(d) “Government” means the State Government;

(e) “licence” means a licence to practice medicine granted under sub-section (1) of section 18;

(f) “member” means a member of the State Council;

(g) “notification” means a notification published in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette;

(h) “prescribed” means prescribed by rules made under this Act;

(i) “President” means the President of the State Council;

(j) “registered medical practitioner” means a practitioner of medicine enrolled under this Act but does not include a person who has been granted provisional registration under section 19;

(k) “Registrar” means the Registrar of the State Council appointed under section 13;
(l) “Regulations” means the regulations made by the State Council under this Act;

(m) “Rules” means rules made under this Act;

(n) “State” means the State of Tamil Nadu;

(o) “State Council” means the Tamil Nadu State Medical Council constituted under section 3;

(p) “State Register” means the register maintained under section 16;

(q) “Vice-Chairperson” means the Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Committee; and

(r) “Vice-President” means the Vice-President of the State Council.

(2) All other words and expressions used herein but not defined, and defined in the National Medical Commission Act, 2019 or the regulations made there under, shall have the meanings, respectively, assigned to them in that Act or those regulations.

CHAPTER-II

THE TAMIL NADU STATE MEDICAL COUNCIL

3. (1) The Government may, by notification, constitute a State Council to be called the Tamil Nadu State Medical Council.

(2) The State Council shall consist of the following members, namely:—

(a) the Registrar of the Tamil Nadu Dr.M.G.R. Medical University, Chennai – ex-officio;

(b) the Director of Medical Education and Research, Chennai – ex-officio;

(c) the Director of Medical and Rural Health Services, Chennai – ex-officio;

(d) the Director of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Chennai – ex-officio;

(e) two members from among the Deans of the Government Medical Colleges in the State and one member from among the Deans of the private Medical Colleges in the State, to be nominated by the Government;

(f) nine members to be elected by the registered medical practitioners from amongst themselves, out of which at least three shall be women; and

(g) four members to be nominated by the Government from amongst the registered medical practitioners having not less than fifteen years of experience in the field of medicine, out of which at least one shall be a woman.
(3) The State Council shall be a body corporate having perpetual succession and a common seal, with power to acquire, hold and dispose of property and to contract, and it may by the said name sue and be sued.

4. (1) The election of members under clause (f) of sub-section (2) of section 3 shall be held in such manner as may be prescribed.

(2) At the first meeting of the State Council after its constitution, the members referred to in sub-section (2) of section 3 shall elect a President and a Vice-President, from amongst the members elected or nominated under clauses (f) and (g) of sub-section (2) of section 3, in such manner as may be prescribed.

(3) In case of any dispute regarding the election or nomination of a member or the election of the President or the Vice-President, such dispute shall be referred to the Government, and the decision of the Government shall be final.

5. (1) The term of office of the elected and nominated members of the State Council, under clauses (f) and (g) of sub-section (2) of section 3 shall be five years from the date of their election or nomination and they are eligible for re-election or re-nomination, as the case may be.

(2) The term of office of the members nominated under clause (e) of sub-section (2) of section 3 shall be two years from the date of their nomination and they are eligible for re-nomination:

Provided that a member nominated under this sub-section shall cease to be a member from the date on which he ceases to be a Dean.

(3) The term of office of the President and the Vice-President shall be two years and they are eligible for re-election:

Provided that the President or the Vice-President shall cease to hold his office from the date on which he ceases to be a member.

6. (1) Any member or the Vice-President may, at any time, resign his office by giving a notice in writing addressed to the President and it shall take effect from the date on which such notice is received by the President.

(2) The President may, at any time, resign his office by giving a notice of thirty days in writing addressed to the State Council and the resignation shall take effect from the date on which it is accepted by the State Council or on the expiry of thirty days from the date of receipt of notice whichever is earlier.

7. (1) Any casual vacancy caused by death, disqualification, resignation or otherwise of any elected or nominated member, including the President and the Vice-President, shall be filled up in accordance with clauses (e), (f) and (g) of sub-section (2) of section 3 and sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 4.

(2) The member so elected or nominated to fill up a casual vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the term of the member in whose place he is elected or nominated.

8. No person shall be eligible for being nominated or elected as a member, if, —
(a) he is an un-discharged insolvent;
(b) he has been convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude;
(c) he has been declared by a competent court to be of unsound mind; or
(d) his licence has been cancelled or suspended under section 20.

9. (1) An elected or a nominated member shall be deemed to have vacated his office, —

(a) on his absence from three consecutive meetings of the State Council;
(b) on his absence from India for a period exceeding six consecutive months;
(c) on cancellation of his licence under section 20; or
(d) on being disqualified for election or nomination under clauses (a) to (c) of section 8.

(2) On occurrence of any vacancy under sub-section (1) or otherwise, the Registrar shall forthwith report the same to the Government.

10. The State Council shall have the powers to—

(a) specify the fee payable for the grant or renewal of licence, transfer of a licence, registration of additional qualifications and any other services rendered by it;
(b) investigate and inquire into complaints of professional and ethical misconduct or medical negligence against the registered medical practitioners;
(c) take disciplinary action against the registered medical practitioners and to impose on them penalties for proven misconduct or negligence in accordance with the regulations made by the National Medical Commission;
(d) suspend or cancel the licence of the registered medical practitioners;
(e) investigate and inquire into the complaints of medical practice by unqualified or unregistered medical practitioners in the State and to take _suo-moto_ action to curb such practices by making criminal complaint to prosecute such persons;
(f) form committees to carry out any of its functions; and
(g) exercise such other powers, as may be conferred upon it by the Government, from time to time.

11. The State Council shall perform the following functions, namely: —

(a) registration of practitioners of medicine in the State;
(b) issuing licence to the registered medical practitioners and its renewal;
(c) issuing no objection certificate for transfer of licence to other States or Union territories;
(d) maintenance of the State Register of registered medical practitioners;
(e) registration of additional medical qualifications;
(f) regulating professional conduct and promoting medical ethics among the registered medical practitioners in accordance with the regulations made under the National Medical Commission Act, 2019;
(g) promoting continuing medical education or continuing professional development programmes for the registered medical practitioners in the State and ensuring that they participate in such programmes and update their professional competency and knowledge;
(h) providing guidance and advice to the registered medical practitioners on professional and ethical conduct relating to medical practice;
(i) ensuring that no unqualified person or un-registered medical practitioner practices medicine in the State;
(j) collaboration with other medical bodies, institutions or organizations to promote health and general well-being of the public at large; and
(k) performance of such other functions as the Government may entrust, from time to time.

12. (1) There shall be an Executive Committee of the State Council, consisting of five members of the State Council including the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson.

(2) The President and Vice-President of the State Council shall be the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Committee.

(3) The other members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by the members elected or nominated under clauses (f) and (g) of sub-section (2) of section 3 from amongst themselves in such manner as may be prescribed.

(4) (a) Every member of the Executive Committee shall hold his office for a period of two years from the date of election or re-election or till he ceases to be a member of the State Council, whichever is earlier.

(b) If any casual vacancy arises in the office of the member of the Executive Committee, such vacancy shall be filled up immediately in the manner as provided in sub-section (3) and the person so elected to fill up a casual vacancy shall hold his office for the remainder of the term of the member in whose place he was elected.

(5) The State Council may delegate any of its powers and functions to the Executive Committee, except the power to make regulations, subject to such conditions as it may deem fit.

(6) No business shall be transacted at a meeting of the Executive Committee unless at least three members of the Executive Committee are present.
(7) Any matter taken up for consideration at a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be decided by the majority of members present and voting. In the event of equality of votes, the Chairperson or in his absence the Vice-Chairperson or any other member of the Executive Committee presiding over the meeting shall have and exercise a casting vote.

13. (1) The State Council shall, with the previous approval of the Government, appoint a Registrar, who shall act as the Secretary to the State Council.

(2) The Registrar shall hold office for a period of three years and shall be eligible for re-appointment for a further period of three years:

Provided that no person appointed as the Registrar shall hold office on attaining the age of sixty years.

(3) The qualifications, salary, allowances and other conditions of service of the Registrar shall be such as may be prescribed.

(4) If any temporary vacancy in the office of the Registrar arises due to leave or any other reason, the State Council may, with the previous approval of the Government, authorise another person to act as the Registrar:

Provided that, when the period of such temporary vacancy does not exceed thirty days, the Executive Committee itself may make such authorisation and forthwith report it to the Government.

14. The Registrar shall—

(a) maintain the State Register in such form and manner as may be prescribed;

(b) arrange and be present at every meeting of the State Council and prepare minutes of that meeting;

(c) be responsible for managing the administrative affairs of the State Council and the Executive Committee, including custody and maintenance of its documents and records;

(d) maintain the accounts of the State Council in such form and manner as may be prescribed;

(e) manage the properties of the State Council;

(f) have supervisory control over the officers and employees of the State Council;

(g) take necessary steps to fill up the vacancies in the State Council and the Executive Committee;

(h) conduct the correspondences on behalf of the State Council, including issue of notices under the rules and regulations;

(i) liaise with the Health Universities, Medical Colleges or Institutions and other Government departments and agencies;

(j) represent the State Council in meetings with the Government, other organizations and the public; and
(k) perform such other duties as may be assigned to him by the
President, from time to time.

15. (1) The State Council may appoint such number of officers
and employees as may be specified in the regulations for the efficient
performance of its functions.

(2) The recruitment, conditions of service, pay and allowances,
discipline and conduct of the officers and employees of the State Council
shall be such as may be specified in the regulations.

CHAPTER - III

REGISTRATION OF MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

16. The State Council shall maintain a State Register containing the
names of the registered medical practitioners in the State in such form as
may be prescribed.

17. (1) Any person who possesses a medical qualification recognised
under the National Medical Commission Act, 2019 and intends to establish
medical practice in the State or to work as a medical professional in any
medical institution or establishment in the State, is eligible to be enrolled in
the State Register as a registered medical practitioner under this Act.

(2) No person shall be eligible for registration under this Act, if, —

(a) he is an un-discharged insolvent;
(b) he is of unsound mind and so declared by a competent
Court; or
(c) his licence issued by the Medical Council of any other
State or the Union territory has been cancelled or suspended for violation
of professional and ethical conduct; or
(d) he has been convicted of an offence involving moral
turpitude.

18. (1) Every person, who is eligible to be enrolled as a medical
practitioner under section 17, may apply to the State Council for registration
along with such fee as may be specified in the regulations and the State
Council, on being satisfied that he is eligible for registration, shall enter his
name in the State Register and grant him a licence to practice medicine
in the State within thirty days from the date of receipt of the application.
The licence shall be valid for a period of five years.

(2) Every registered medical practitioner, who intends to register
any additional medical qualification shall apply to the State Council in the
prescribed form together with the original certificate of such additional
qualification along with such fee as may be specified in the regulations. The
State Council shall, if satisfied, make necessary entries relating to such
additional medical qualification in the State Register.

(3) Every registered medical practitioner shall, for the renewal
of the licence, apply to the State Council, along with such fee as may
be specified in the regulations, before three months of expiration of the
licence. The State Council shall, after ensuring that the registered medical
practitioner has participated in professional meetings as part of continuing
medical education programmes for at least thirty hours, renew the licence
for a period of five years and make necessary entries relating to such
renewal in the State Register:
Provided that if no application for renewal of licence is received before expiration of the validity of licence, the name of the medical practitioner in the State Register shall be marked as inactive and the said person shall not be entitled to practice medicine after the expiration of the validity of licence.

(4) If a medical practitioner who is registered with the Medical Council of any other State or a Union territory intends to transfer such registration to this State, such medical practitioner shall apply to the State Council in such manner as may be specified in the regulations with a no objection certificate. The State Council may register the name of such applicant in the State Register on payment of such fee as may be specified in the regulations.

19. (1) A person who has passed the qualifying examination of any University or medical institution in India for the grant of a recognised medical qualification and a person who obtains a foreign medical qualification and qualifies to register under the regulations made by the National Medical Commission shall apply for provisional registration to the State Council in such form and manner along with such fee as may be specified in the regulations.

(2) On receipt of the application under sub-section (1), the State Council may provisionally register the name of the applicant in the State Register so as to enable him to undergo Compulsory Rotating Medical Internship in hospitals or medical institutions in the State.

20. (1) If a registered medical practitioner becomes disqualified under sub-section (2) of section 17 or violates any of the regulations relating to the professional and ethical conduct in medical practice, the State Council may suspend his licence. Thereafter, upon conduct of inquiry, and after giving a reasonable opportunity of being heard, the State Council may cancel his licence and remove his name from the State Register for the reasons to be recorded in writing.

(2) The State Council reserves the right to cancel the licence of a registered medical practitioner, at any time after giving an opportunity of being heard, if it is found that he has obtained the licence by making false representation or has concealed any material fact or document, which attracts disqualification for his registration in the State Register.

(3) A medical practitioner whose licence has been cancelled under sub-section (2) shall forthwith surrender his licence to the State Council.

(4) A registered medical practitioner may also apply for cancellation of his licence, in the form specified in the regulations, enclosing his licence, to the State Council for any of the following reasons, namely:

(a) retirement from medical practice;

(b) intention to pursue interests or career other than medical practice; or

(c) any other reason which necessitates withdrawal from medical practice:

Provided that, no such application shall be entertained by the State Council, if any disciplinary proceeding is pending or contemplated against the registered medical practitioner.
(5) Every cancellation of licence by the State Council under this section shall be published in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette by the Registrar and the name of such medical practitioner shall be removed from the State Register.

(6) If a medical practitioner, whose licence has been cancelled under sub-section (4) intends to practice again, he may get himself re-registered with the State Council and obtain a fresh licence, if he is otherwise eligible for registration and grant of licence. In that case, the provisions contained in section 18 shall mutatis mutandis apply.

21. (1) Every registered medical practitioner shall be bound by the professional and ethical conduct as may be specified in the regulations made under the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, from time to time.

(2) The State Council may impose one or more of the following penalties against any registered medical practitioner for violation of professional and ethical conduct referred to in sub-section (1), as it may deem fit, namely: —

(a) censure;
(b) fine;
(c) requiring to undergo continuing medical education, training or counselling;
(d) undertaking community service or any other form of social service;
(e) compliance with any restriction or condition in regard to medical practice;
(f) suspension of licence; or
(g) cancellation of licence and removal of name from the State Register.

Provided that, no such order shall be made unless the registered medical practitioner is given an opportunity of making a written representation against the proposed penalty.

22. Any person aggrieved by an order of the State Council under sections 18 to 21 may, within thirty days from the date of receipt of the order, prefer an appeal to the Ethics and Medical Registration Board.

23. Any person aggrieved by an order of the Ethics and Medical Registration Board in an appeal preferred under section 22 may, within sixty days from the date of receipt of the order, prefer a second appeal to the National Medical Commission.

24. The Registrar shall annually cause to be printed and published, in such form and manner as may be prescribed, a list of names of all the medical practitioners registered under this Act. The list shall also be published in the official website of the State Council.

25. The State Council, while exercising the powers and discharging the functions under this Chapter shall follow the regulations made under the National Medical Commission Act, 2019.
CHAPTER IV

MEETINGS OF THE STATE COUNCIL

26. (1) The State Council shall meet at least once in three months on such date, time and place, as the President may determine.

(2) The meetings of the State Council shall be convened and conducted in such manner as may be specified in the regulations.

(3) The President shall preside over the meetings of the State Council. If the President is absent, the Vice-President, and in the absence of both, a member elected by the members present at the meeting, shall preside over the meeting.

(4) Any matter taken up for consideration in a meeting of the State Council shall be decided by a majority of the members present and voting and in the case of equality of votes, the person presiding over that meeting shall have and exercise a casting vote.

(5) Ten members shall form the quorum for a meeting of the State Council.

(6) The President, Vice-President and the members shall be entitled to such sitting fees and allowances for attending the meetings of the State Council, as may be specified in the regulations.

27. No act or proceeding of the State Council shall be invalid merely by reason of, —

(a) any vacancy in, or any defect in the constitution of the State Council; or

(b) any defect in the election or nomination of the President, the Vice-President or any other member; or

(c) any irregularity in the procedure followed by the State Council not affecting the merits of the case.

CHAPTER-V

FINANCE, ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

28. (1) The State Council shall have its own fund, namely, the Tamil Nadu State Medical Council Fund, which shall be administered by it.

(2) The following shall be credited to the Fund, namely: —

(a) all fees, charges and fine amount received by the State Council;

(b) any grant or donation received by the State Council from the Government or any other person; and

(c) any income derived by the State Council from investments or other sources.

(3) The Fund shall be utilised to meet the expenses of the State Council, including payment of salaries and allowances to the Registrar, its officers and employees, sitting fees and allowances to its members, procurement of equipments and vehicles and other administrative expenses.
29. (1) The accounts of the State Council shall be maintained in such form and manner as may be prescribed. The State Council shall prepare an annual statement of accounts in such form and manner as may be prescribed.

(2) The accounts of the State Council shall be audited annually by an auditor appointed by the Government.

CHAPTER-VI
MISCELLANEOUS

30. The President, the Vice-President, the members, the Registrar and officers and employees of the State Council shall, when acting or purporting to act in pursuance of the provisions of this Act shall be deemed to be public servants within the meaning of section 21 of the Indian Penal Code.

31. No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against the State Council, the President, the Vice-President, other members, the Registrar or officers and employees of the State Council for anything done in good faith or intended to be done under this Act or rules or regulations.

32. (1) If, at any time, it appears to the Government that the State Council has failed to exercise or has exceeded or abused any of the powers or functions conferred on it by or under this Act, and if in the opinion of the Government such failure, excess or abuse is of a serious nature, the Government may direct the State Council to rectify or refrain from such default, excess, or abuse, within such time as may be specified. If the State Council fails to comply with any of such directions, the Government may supersede the State Council and appoint an officer of the Government, not below the rank of a Dean of a medical college, to discharge the powers and functions of the State Council for a period not exceeding six months.

(2) The Government shall, thereafter, take necessary steps to reconstitute the State Council in accordance with the provisions of this Act before the expiry of the said period of six months.

33. If any difficulty arises in giving effect to any of the provisions of this Act, the Government may, by notification, make such provision, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, as it may appear to them to be necessary or expedient for removing that difficulty:

Provided that no such notification shall be issued after the expiry of two years from the date of commencement of this Act.

34. (1) The Government may, by notification, make rules to carry out all or any of the purposes of this Act.

(2) All rules or regulations made and notifications or orders issued under this Act shall be published in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette and, unless they are expressed to come into force on a particular day, shall come into force on the day on which they are so published.
(3) Every rule made or notification issued under this Act, shall, as soon as possible, after it is made or issued, be placed on the table of the Legislative Assembly and if, before the expiry of the session in which it is so placed or the next session, the Assembly makes any modification in any such rule, notification or the Assembly decides that the rule, notification should not be made or issued, the rule or notification shall thereafter have effect, only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be, so however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule or notification.

35. (1) The State Council may, with the previous approval of the Government, make regulations not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act and the rules.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such regulations may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely: —

(a) convening and holding of meetings of the State Council and of the Executive Committee;

(b) the manner of conduct of business in the meetings;

(c) forming of committees of the State Council;

(d) maintenance of accounts and preparation of balance sheets of the State Council;

(e) manner of recruitment, conditions of service, pay and allowances, discipline and conduct, of officers and employees of the State Council;

(f) fee to be collected for registration, licence, renewal of licence and transfer of licence and registration of additional qualifications;

(g) procedure for carrying out the functions of the State Council; and

(h) any other matter which is to be or may be provided in the regulations.

36. (1) The Tamil Nadu Medical Registration Act, 1914 is hereby repealed.

(2) Notwithstanding such repeal, the repeal shall not, —

(a) affect anything done or any action taken under the Act so repealed, before the commencement of this Act;

(b) affect any right, privilege, obligation or liability acquired, accrued or incurred under the Act so repealed;

(c) affect any fine, penalty, forfeiture, or punishment incurred in respect of any offence committed against the Act so repealed; or
(d) affect an investigation, legal proceeding, or remedy in respect of any such right, privilege, liability, fine, penalty, forfeiture, or punishment, as aforesaid and any such investigation, legal proceeding, or remedy may be instituted, continued, or enforced, and any such fine, penalty, forfeiture, or punishment may be imposed, as if that Act had not been repealed.

(3) All persons who are registered as medical practitioners under the Tamil Nadu Medical Registration Act, 1914 and whose names find place in the medical register under that Act, on the date of commencement of this Act, shall be deemed to have been registered under this Act and their names shall be entered in the State Register.
STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The Tamil Nadu Medical Council is a statutory body established under the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Medical Registration Act, 1914. (Tamil Nadu Act IV of 1914). The said Act is a Pre-Independent law and it was enacted when there was the Presidency of Madras, as it stood prior to the reorganisation of the states on linguistic basis.

2. The Hon’ble High Court of Madras in its common order dated 6.12.2022 in W.P.Nos.28649 of 2022 and 31454 of 2022 has observed that the said enactment as well as the rules are archaic and they need complete revamp and also directed the Government to consider introducing reforms in the election process.

3. In view of the above, the Government have decided to repeal the said Tamil Nadu Act IV of 1914 and to reenact a new law in its place.

4. The Bill seeks to give effect to the above decision.

Ma. SUBRAMANIAN,
Minister for Health and Family Welfare.
MEMORANDUM REGARDING DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Clauses 1(3), 3(1), 4(1) and (2), 12(3), 13(3), 14, 16, 29, 32, 33, 34 and 35 of the Bill authorise the Government, the Tamil Nadu State Medical Council to issue notifications or directions or orders or to make rules or regulations, as the case may be, to carry out the purposes specified therein.

2. The powers delegated are normal and not of an exceptional character.

Ma. SUBRAMANIAN,
Minister for Health and Family Welfare.

Secretariat,
Chennai-600 009,
21st February 2024.

K. SRINIVASAN,
Principal Secretary.