

IMA chief in dock for 'taking money' from pharma firms

His predecessor too faces similar charge, both issued show-cause notice

VISHAV BHARTI
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Two top Indian Medical Association (IMA) office-bearers are in the dock for allegedly receiving money from pharmaceutical companies in their bank accounts. The Punjab Medical Council has issued notices to them asking why their registration shouldn't be cancelled for indulging in "unethical practice".

Sources in the PMC said the council registrar issued show-cause notices to IMA Punjab president Dr Surinderpal Singh Sooch and former president Dr Manoj Sobti.

Dr Sooch runs a hospital in Phagwara and Dr Sobti in Ludhiana. Dr Sooch

YET TO GET NOTICE, SAY DOCTORS

Dr Surinderpal Singh Sooch said: "I have not received any notice so far. I will only comment after receiving it."

The transactions: As per the records available with The Tribune, in two transactions on August 6, 2014, Dr Sooch received ₹15,000 each from Intas Pharmaceuticals Ltd. In another transaction, he received ₹50,000 from the same company. On September 18, 2014, he received ₹1 lakh from Sanofi India Ltd.

Dr Manoj Sobti said: "I have yet to receive the show-cause notice. I won't be able to comment on the issue as of now." When he was showed a copy of the notice, he said: "Let it come to me officially."

His transactions: He allegedly received ₹1.2 lakh from Torrent Pharma Ltd on August 19, 2014, and ₹20,000 from Ranbaxy Laboratories on September 9.

received allegedly ₹1.8 lakh in four transactions from Intas Pharmaceutical Ltd and Sanofi India Limited. Dr Sobti allegedly received

₹1.2 lakh from Torrent Pharmaceutical Ltd on August 19, 2014 and ₹20,000 from Ranbaxy Laboratories on September 9, 2014. (See box)

The show-cause notice sent to both the doctors read: "During the scrutiny of records, it has come to the notice that you have received cheques from pharmaceutical companies." The council has also attached the details of the financial transactions along with the notice.

The notices were served under Section 6.8.1 of the amended Code of Medical Ethics Regulations 2002, which prohibits a medical practitioner from accepting any cash or benefits from any pharmaceutical and allied industry for individual purpose in individual capacity under any pretext.

The council has given three weeks to both doctors to file their reply.

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