

## Health policy must be pro poor

Sunday, 21 September 2008

The controversial draft health policy is a glowing example of such unwarranted action. So, rightly, Physicians have urged the government not to implement the proposed health policy which, among other things, seeks to privatize the government hospitals and health complexes. They said, if the new health policy is implemented, the government hospitals and health complexes will be handed over to the private sector.

The controversial draft health policy is a glowing example of such unwarranted action. So, rightly, Physicians have urged the government not to implement the proposed health policy which, among other things, seeks to privatize the government hospitals and health complexes. They said, if the new health policy is implemented, the government hospitals and health complexes will be handed over to the private sector. They alleged that the country's private hospitals and clinics owners are doing brisk business and now they want to grab the government hospitals and clinics to expand their booming business. The physicians' opposition to the implementation of the proposed health policy, specially, to the privatization of the hospitals, is justified at least one two grounds. Firstly, the poor patients who get free treatment at government hospitals will be deprived of this facility and secondly, people in general will face serious difficulties in getting medical care as the charges of treatment at private hospitals and clinics are already very high and will be raised further taking advantage of monopoly. In other words privatization of the hospitals will help a section of businessmen earn more profit, but make medical treatment unaffordable for the poor people. The country's health sector as a whole is corruption-ridden and almost all public hospitals are plunged in mismanagement, irregularities and anomalies. The patients hardly get proper medical treatment in these hospitals. Yet, it is a fact that the poor patients who are unable to meet the high cost of treatment in private clinics and hospitals can come to the public hospitals and get at least limited medicare there. So, handing over of the government hospitals to the private sector is not any solution to the crisis prevailing in the health service sector as it will deprive the poor people of whatever medicare is available at government hospitals and pave the way for monopoly health care business at the private hospitals. Rather corruption and anomaly free hospitals can solve the problem to an extent.