

## Nationwide strikes intensify as Indian doctors demand Justice for raped and murdered colleague

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Indian doctors have escalated nationwide protests and strikes following the rape and murder of a 31-year-old colleague at a state-run hospital in Kolkata. The brutal crime, discovered on August 9, has ignited outrage across the country, bringing renewed attention to the persistent issue of violence against women.

“We are amplifying our protests to demand justice for our colleague,” stated Suvrankar Datta of New Delhi’s All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). Several government hospitals in various states have already suspended elective services indefinitely in response to the killing. Both government and private medical unions have joined the strike, with a nationwide withdrawal of

non-essential services planned for 24 hours starting Saturday.

In Kolkata, thousands took to the streets for a candlelight vigil on the eve of India's Independence Day, mourning the doctor's death and condemning violence against women. Reports indicate the victim's body was found in the hospital's seminar hall, where she may have been resting during her shift. An autopsy confirmed she had been sexually assaulted, and her parents believe she was gang-raped.

While one suspect—a hospital worker—has been detained, accusations of mishandling the case by state authorities have further fueled public anger. India, with an average of 90 rapes reported daily in 2022, continues to struggle with sexual violence against women.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation on Thursday, calling for swift and severe punishment for those responsible for such “monstrous” acts. Doctors have also called for the immediate implementation of the Central Protection Act to safeguard healthcare workers from violence.